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Reviewed by
ANNA LOUISE STRONG

Cartoons by Gropper, Redfield, Reinhardt, Ajay, Del, Others

ON THE COVER
Eamon De Valera
TURN TO PAGE 6

AUG. 2, 1938

FIFTEEN CENTS

New MASSES

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Between Ourselves

RUTH MCKENNEY, whose "Meet the Communists" and "What Every Red-Baiter Should Know" and "Look What You Did to Grandma, Dorothy Thompson!" we published recently; and whose volume of collected sketches, *My Sister Eileen,* is just out (see page 26)—of which book Amy Loveman, in the *Saturday Review of Literature,* says,

"There's a laugh on every page,"

. . . and the New York *Post* reviewer, Herschel Brickell, says,

"She's my favorite woman humorist at present,"

. . . and the New York *Times'* Mr. Charles Poore says,

"Any turn for the better that you may notice in the world's sullen temper this summer may as well be ascribed to the appearance of *My Sister Eileen,*"

. . . and Heywood Broun, coming closer to the heart of the matter, writes:

"The first time I saw Ruth McKenney she was speaking at a protest meeting, and one of her friends said, 'You know, we call her "The Red Gracie Allen."' That deceived me. It was not until a second meeting that I realized the uncommon good sense of the young woman."

. . . Ruth McKenney is joining the editorial staff of NEW MASSES about September 1.

As we go to press, a bomb of unknown origin has killed forty-six persons, all but one of whom were Arabs, in a crowded market in Haifa, one of the chief cities of Palestine. This act of terrorism, one of many in recent months, is one of the reasons we asked Maurice Samuel and Paul Novick to write on the question: "Is There a Solution for Palestine?" Mr. Samuel writes from the Zionist viewpoint, though he does not officially represent the Zionist movement. He is the author of several books on Palestine, among them, *On the Rim of the Wilderness: Conflict in Palestine* and *What Happened In Palestine: The Events of August 1929.* Mr. Novick is managing editor of the *Jewish Morning Freiheit,* Communist organ. He is the author of the popular pamphlet, *Zionism Today.* Both authors, in addition to their independently written articles, will comment on each other's articles within five-hundred-word limits. Articles and comments together will be published next week.

The second article on conditions "Inside Fascist Italy" by Margareta West will appear next week.

What's What

MRS. M. M. ALBACH, of Newark, N. J., encloses, in a letter to us, a postcard she received from a friend who was vacationing near Kingston, N. Y. It is a very conventional postcard, showing a section of the Storm King Highway and telling, in the descriptive note on the back, how Washington's troops were once forced to scale Storm King Mountain in order to reach West Point and how the highway that now skirts the mountain is the most expensive piece of road construction in the world, etc., etc. But on the back of the card, in the lower left-hand corner, is a swastika the size of the postage stamp and having no apparent relevance. The postcard was sold (or made) by O'Reilley's in Kingston and should be given, says Mrs. Albach, "a little adverse puublicity."

At seventy-six, Ella Reeve Bloor can look back—if it were in her nature to look back, instead of keeping her eyes steadily fixed on the needs of the present and the hope for the future—on a lifetime of peerless devotion to the cause of labor. She was a suffragette as early as 1900; a trade-union organizer shortly afterward; a friend of Eugene Victor Debs; a labor editor. She helped Upton Sinclair gather material for *The Jungle;* and from 1910 to 1930 witnessed and participated in some of the most tragic and bitter labor struggles. She was at the terrible Calumet, Mich., fire where miners' children were burned to death, and at the Ludlow, Colo., massacre; she was one of the band of progressives who fought for the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti. "Mother" Bloor is seventy-six this month, still active, still aflame with the passion for humanity that has burned in her all her life. We are glad to direct our New York readers' attention to a celebration in Mother Bloor's honor, Sunday, July 31, at Pleasant Bay Park.

Richard Greenleaf and John Adams, both of Orlando, Fla., collaborated on the following letter:

"Several recent cartoons in NEW MASSES have represented the oppressors of the South as the traditional Southern Colonel. This may be good cartooning but it's bad politics. Have you seen any 'Southern Colonel' faces among the gentry photographed at the Harlan trial? And don't you know anyway that the man on top of the South is that bloated bum whose Rolls-Royce nearly ran over you when you were on your way to the NEW MASSES office this morning? Look it up sometime; even most of the Southern *land* is owned by Northern corporations. If you see any more colonels sticking their heads out of portfolios you should say, 'Take off those whiskers—we know you!'"

Who's Who

HARRIET SILVERMAN is executive secretary of the People's National Health Committee. At the Washington conference she represented that organization and the Workers Alliance. . . . R. Palme Dutt will continue to contribute regularly on foreign affairs. . . . The article on page 9 by Father Michael O'Flanagan is the prepared text of his speech in New York's Madison Square Garden on Tuesday, July 19. . . . John Laird is a student of Kentucky politics. . . . Col. Stanislav Yester is the Czechoslovakian army officer who contributed a summary of Czech defense plans to our June 21 issue. . . . Lawrence Clark Powell, of the University Library, University of California, writes that he has been gathering material on B. Traven for four years. . . . K. N. Cameron is an instructor of English at the University of Wisconsin.

Flashback

IT IS reliably reported by the English correspondent for "Flashbacks" that there will be no special celebration at Cliveden this weekend marking the anniversary of the day (July 31) in 1919 when London bobbies went on strike against a proposed government ban of their union. . . . Likewise we learn that Chamberlain is not planning to appease the Comintern by setting aside July 31 for celebration of the eighteenth anniversary of the formation of the British Communist Party. . . . However, we have reason to believe that Mr. Chamberlain will shoot a grouse at the exact moment on August 1 at which the gavel fell in 1774 calling to order the premonitory first Continental Congress of the rebellious American colonies. . . . American Socialists, also grousing, may note—all three thousand of them—that on July 31, 1901, the Socialist Party of America was organized at Indianapolis with ten thousand members.

THIS WEEK

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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YOUR HEALTH, AMERICA!

Notes on an Epochal Conference

HARRIET SILVERMAN

Two stubborn facts emerged from the three-day deliberations of the broadest National Health Conference ever held in this country. First, the health of the great impoverished mass of the American people is in a critical state. Disease is rampant. Something must be done about this. Equally obvious was the cleavage between the progressive forces, unanimously in favor of the comprehensive health plan proposed, and the alignment of "yes—but" men, among the entrenched medical hierarchy of the American Medical Association. Paul Kellogg indirectly compared them with King Canute. The audience chortled at the idea of holding back the tide now moving to meet the challenge of the nation's sick. To Dr. Morris Fishbein, this was a conference for which the "patient has written a prescription for Radway's Ready Relief which the doctors have been asked to underwrite." "Without proper integration," declared this demagogue, "we will lose the benefits of civilization." In essence, this opposition may be summed up in his own words: "medicine is a different *business*." The vested interests brook no interference by the people, here or elsewhere!

The conference discussions were absorbing; the interest intense. Here was an audience called together at the request of President Roosevelt to consider the serious plight of the nation's sick in the cities, the towns, the rural areas particularly, where illness is a catastrophe, where there are few medical facilities, often none at all, where the doctor is a luxury poor people cannot indulge in even before they depart this life! Reflecting not only the various branches of the medical profession, state and local health administrators, scientists and research experts, but for the first time, the ranks of organized labor, farmers, the unemployed, parent-teachers, civic and welfare bodies, women's clubs, consumers, cooperatives, and religious groups, the delegates represented the broadest cross-section of the people ever invited to participate in such a conference.

The President's message to the conference, read by its able chairman, Miss Josephine Roche, declared:

> Nothing is more important to a nation than the health of its people. . . . Medical science has made remarkable strides, and in cooperation with government and voluntary agencies it has made substantial progress in the control of various diseases. . . . But when we see what we know how to do, yet have not done, it is clear that there is need for a coordinated national program of action.

United States Surgeon General Thomas Parran, Jr., struck the keynote of the proceedings:

> The people are beginning to take it for granted that an equal opportunity for health is a basic American right. . . . Those of us who are concerned with the progress of medical science usually think that the great events of medicine occur only in the research laboratory or in the operating room. We are witnessing here in Washington another kind of progress in medicine—an effort to put medical science to work. The National Health Conference may well be the greatest event in medical science which has happened in our time.

The magnitude of the present health problem was disclosed early in 1938 by the President's interdepartmental committee in the report of its technical committee. This national health survey, the most comprehensive ever made in the United States, covered close to three million people in eighty-one cities. It revealed a devastating increase in *preventable* sickness and premature death, as a result of the severe economic crisis. The survey itself was a by-product of unemployment, conducted as a WPA project, at an expenditure of $3,500,000 from work-relief funds. Seventy-five thousand infants are stillborn, and more than sixty thousand are condemned to death during the first month of life in the richest country of the world. Each year there are seventy thousand deaths from tuberculosis, and for every death five active cases, or 350,000 tuberculosis victims.

Lithograph by A. Ajay

Slum Child

Only the cynical opposition doubted the overwhelming evidence of mass misery, or that "It is cause for grave concern and for action that the poor of our large cities experience sickness and mortality rates, as high today as were the gross rates of fifty years ago." The AMA has now undertaken a survey. Commenting on this, Dr. Hugh Cabot, consulting surgeon at the Mayo Clinic, and member of the progressive bloc of 430, said:

> I do not myself feel much confidence in the results, because I am not clear by precisely what method physicians are to know about the people whom they never see. The people who get no medical care obviously don't crowd the doctors' offices and precisely how they are to arrive at figures that are more convincing is beyond the limits of m slow mind. . . . Unfortunately, gentlemen, we forge that facts keep no better than fish. Many of th facts with which we are asked to deal are very distinctly in the realm of canned goods. . . . I take the liberty of suggesting that we get over th survey business and get on with the war.

From organized labor came the insiste call for action and constructive proposals o what to do first. Throwing the searchlight o the casualties of the industrial battlefield Walter Polakov, director of the engineerin department of the United Mine Workers c America, spoke in behalf of some three mi lion inhabitants of coal communities. The cident rate, due to electricity and electr transport, declared Polakov, has "incre

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1900 by 50 percent and 25 percent re-tively, and compared with all other oc-ations, kills forty-four miners as against twenty-nine in other trades." He urged research into actual problems of organizing preventive medicine and mental hygiene to cut the suicide rate.

With no minimum standards for workmen's compensation laws, with occupational diseases more generally ignored than compensated, with over a million workers in dusty trades, affected by that one devastating disease, silicosis, practically denied any benefits under the laws, and given the runaround by private insurance companies, it would first be necessary drastically to change and liberalize the existing laws, and then transfer them out of the hands of private insurance carriers to exclusive state funds. A system of compulsory health insurance would be the more logical solution, and would offer the advantage of a fresh start. This is indicated in the program of the National Health Conference, probably as an extension of the Social Security Act. Taxing the poor will not solve the problem. Nor will insurance answer the immediate needs of the low-income families who cannot pay on any basis. A resolution introduced in the name of the Workers Alliance and the People's National Health Committee, which I represented, calls for immediate provision of free medical care for families with incomes under $2000; for the building of people's health centers, as guardians of the people's health in the communities, with representatives of the neighborhoods and labor unions participating in the administration, and also for speeding slum clearance to help those who desperately need decent low-rental housing.

Florence Greenberg, the youngest delegate, chairman of the Council of Women's Auxiliaries of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, stirred the conference by answering the doubts of Dr. Olin West, secretary of the AMA, and inviting the delegates to see the side of Chicago which she knows best. The disgraceful use of patrol wagons, because Chicago has no emergency ambulance service, the dangerous working conditions and occupational diseases among steel workers, the crying need for sanatoria for tuberculosis victims, the general lack of adequate medical facilities, the hovels which steel workers and the stockyard families are forced to endure, startled the audience. Miss Greenberg recommended a twelve-point program to partially meet the needs.

Lee Pressman, general counsel and spokesman for the CIO, declared that "reactionary forces always find obstacles to prevent us from having any program," and that through "federal administration, we feel it is essential that we have federal insurance which will include public health services and cash benefits and disability benefits." He favored general taxation and appropriations by the government, not a payroll tax on the employed. United action on this issue between the AF of L and CIO would work wonders to hasten the federal program which all the other labor spokesmen support. Other labor organizations present were the United Automobile Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, represented by Mrs. Dorothy J. Bellanca, vice-president.

John Heliker

Roosevelt Story

Speaking for the Associated Women of the American Farm Bureau Federation, representing forty states, two thousand counties, and an individual membership of more than three million persons, Mrs. H. W. Ahart, president, reported: "Four-fifths of the rural areas of the United States lack any organized health services. Generally speaking, human life in the United States is today being wasted recklessly. . . . We are sixty years behind Europe in providing health insurance." Health insurance, maternity and child care, periodic health examinations, and a program of disease prevention were among the points advocated by this group.

Dr. George W. Bowles, president-elect of the National Medical Association, composed of Negro physicians, charged organized medicine with having "ignored the health of our people. . . . There are two hundred nurses to take care of nine million Negroes in the South." He urged that at least fifteen hundred nurses be added immediately. Dr. Louis T. Wright, chairman of the board of directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said: "Disease draws no color line." Both speakers stressed the deplorable neglect of the Negro population, compelled to live in the segregated slums of the big cities and the disease-breeding hovels of the South. Tuberculosis takes its greatest toll among the Negroes. And the infant death rate for Negro babies in some areas is 75 percent greater than for the white population.

As spokesman for the recently formed People's National Health Committee, it was necessary for me to stress the importance of speeding action on the government's ten-year program. When one remembers that "in the past twenty-five years 375,000 of our women are known to have died to bring the world new life, and that this is a number greater than that of all the men killed in all our wars since the Declaration of Independence," how much longer can we wantonly ignore the crimes against motherhood? Or be satisfied with a long-range view? If it is a question of dollars and cents, this calculation must yield before the storm of the people's demand for action now. Women who are the childbearers, fathers whose children and wives are thus shamelessly allowed to die of neglect and indifference, must demand free medical care for every woman who bears a child. Necessary and complete medical care is imperative to keep mothers and newborn children alive. Any progress that falls short of this minimum proposal commits a crime against the next generation and is party to the present policy of mass murder.

Poverty diets and starvation also require immediate measures. Cutting off relief, as was done recently in Cleveland, can only create further havoc. In many parts of the country the people's food has unquestionably been far below the requirements of proper nourishment. Relief diets have come in for their share of criticism in this respect. In sections of the South something closely resembling mass starvation exists. A federal investigation is needed at once to establish the extent of these conditions and to take action on them.

Similarly any serious consideration of what makes for the people's health must deal boldly and effectively with the problem of housing and slum clearance. In the mining and steel towns, in the congested communities where the Negro people are segregated, overcrowding and squalor are a national scandal. Slum clearance must be speeded up, thus stabilizing employment and hastening economic recovery. It should also be borne in mind that WPA and PWA funds are immediately available to begin building people's health centers for diagnostic, preventive, and curative care, which would simultaneously open new employment possibilities for white-collar workers and professionals, as well as for skilled and unskilled workers, while at the same time initiating the government program in territories where the need is greatest. In the Southern communities it is also possible to provide traveling medical service to meet the present emergency needs. The People's National Health Committee presented nine basic principles as the foundation of a minimum program:

1. The health of the people is the *first* responsibility of government.
2. Economic security, jobs, higher wages, shorter hours to maintain health.
3. Extension of the Social Security Law to provide adequate medical care and a federal system of compulsory health insurance, with disability benefits, and the inclusion of workers now excluded under the act.
4. Reorganization and extension of the powers of the United States Public Health Service, imperative to coordinate all health work. Also a representative in the President's Cabinet.
5. Establishing people's health centers.
6. Adequate pay for physicians, nurses, dentists, and other professionals who render service to the people.
7. Adequate provisions for coping with the special problems of mental diseases, venereal diseases, cancer, tuberculosis, and infantile paralysis.
8. Prevention to be the keynote of all health work.
9. Federal subsidies to the states to carry out a national program.

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In addition, the committee offered six proposals for immediate action:

1. Free medical care—for all families with incomes of $2000 a year or less, with additional provisions of food, clothing for relief and WPA families.

2. Save mothers and babies—by providing adequate medical care, pre- and post-natal, doctor and nurse in attendance during childbirth, provision for hospitalization where needed, and other necessities. Also registration of all pregnant women by the departments of health as is now done for births, deaths, or communicable diseases. Maternity insurance for mother and child.

3. Stamp out tuberculosis and syphilis—by providing periodic and thorough examinations to detect and prevent tuberculosis. Also silicosis—X-ray, special laboratory tests, and follow-up to be provided.

4. Protection for workers on the job—with minimum national safety and workmen's compensation standards for the states to cover accidents and *all* occupational diseases.

5. Establishment of people's health centers.

6. Slum clearance, enlarging the appropriations to increase the building of low-rental modern dwellings.

These proposals dovetail with the government's proposals for "meeting with reasonable adequacy existing deficiencies in the nation's health services." The federal program calls for the expansion of public health for maternal and child health, on a gradually expanding basis to reach a total of expenditures of $165,000,000 for the tenth year. Thanks to the earnest efforts of Miss Katherine F. Lenroot, chief of the Children's Bureau, there is serious consideration now being directed to this problem. The expansion of hospital facilities is the second federal recommendation, the total annual cost being estimated at $126,050,000, with the recommendation to construct five hundred health and diagnostic centers. Medical care for the medically needy is next, beginning this program with an annual expenditure of $50,000,000 for the first year. The fourth provision is a general program of medical care, and fifth, insurance against the loss of wages during sickness, in other words some form of health insurance. I. S. Falk presented an extensive report on this question. The maximum annual cost to the federal, state, and local government of recommendations one, two, and three is estimated at about $850,000,000 a year. The federal government plans to share half this amount, allowing grants-in-aid to the states.

Only the government is capable of bringing order out of the present medical chaos and of putting an end to the deplorable situation in which millions of sick people, even in prosperous times, are forced to do without medical care. Taxing the poor to pay for the poorest is not the solution. WPA and PWA funds are available now to start a program of health projects. Ample precedents already exist in this respect. The use of these funds would help to meet the needs of the lowest income group. Congress has more than once granted the United States Public Health Service authority to attack problems regardless of state boundaries.

The half-hearted promise of cooperation in the government's health plan, from Dr. Irvin Abell, president of the AMA, was a concession to the support and progressive sentiment of the conference. New York's Commissioner of Hospitals, Dr. S. S. Goldwater, unfortunately leaned the other way in trying to put the brakes on the program. Dr. John P. Peters, secretary to the committee of 430 progressives, threw the challenge of standards back to the doubting Thomases, with the remark: "My respect for the medical profession is so great that I am sure the quality of medical care will never depend on who pays the doctors." Prof. C. E. A. Winslow of Yale answered the doctor who thought the conference was a "premature infant," with the emphatic statement: "I think this infant is older than he thinks and I suggest that all it needs is a little administration of vitamins CIO and AF of L and whatever kind of vitamins they make in the Farm Bureau, to make it a pretty husky child."

In his recent fireside chat, the President renewed his request for support of his progressive policies. If the administration now makes the health crisis the next focus of attack, as indicated in its program to the conference, the endorsement of the people will be unmistakably plain. The next step is to arouse the great mass of the people to the meaning of the government's health plan, to rally their support for it, to hold local conferences throughout the country, and to conduct campaigns that will translate the program into action, bring adequate medical care without delay to those who need it most. The administration needs this demonstration of support from the people. The people must use their political power to force action in their communities defeating the forces hostile to the New Deal program.

A high standard of medical care is one of the necessities of life. Someone suggested it would be better to lean on the broad shoulders of Uncle Sam, to get this started, than on the cadaver of the old English Poor Law, which the reactionaries seem to favor. The federal spending program is not socialized medicine. Rank-and-file doctors are on the side of the people, and they will soon realize that federal aid in building hospitals, people's health centers, extending the fields of medical research, and in other ways amplifying the present medical facilities, will create new channels of usefulness for doctors and other professionals. The average doctor today spends one-third of his time idle, waiting for patients when he is not attending the sick who cannot pay fees.

In this effort to advance the well-being of the nation, is it too much to ask the bankers to extend any credit that may be needed to cooperate with the government in safeguarding the future of America? Would not a far-reaching program to prevent illness and premature death be a sound investment for the monopolies since they are not concerned with the heartbreak or misery of the people? The people will thunder approval, demanding t birthright and new interpretation of t "welfare" clause of the Constitution. T Washington conference of July 18-20 m well mark a turning point in medical h tory in America.

★

UNION VS. RAILROAD

RECENTLY the Association of American Railroads have been bidding heavily for public opinion in a series of full-page advertisements in the *Saturday Evening Post*. The Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen has answered the main arguments of the company in their magazine, which is summarized below by Labor Research Association in the monthly bulletin, *Railroad Notes*. Below *"R"* stands for the railroads, *"U"* for the union. The union replies to the main items proposed by the companies as follows:

R: Ask for equality of treatment and opportunity, that waterways be regulated as highways and carriers now are, and that the Federal Barge Line b discontinued.

U: Has long fought for a program of equalit in the transport industry. Apparently the carrier do not seek equality but decisions in their favor.

R: No more restrictive laws. We ask authority to set rates.

U: Previous malpractice compels strict regulation. Public welfare demands that railroad corporations as well as citizens be kept within the pale of the law.

R: Reductions of operating expenses must com through wage cuts.

U: Pare your expenses by eliminating special services to favored corporations, costly advertising, and extravagant gambling in corporation securities; and by reducing exorbitant payrolls of railroad executives.

R: Seek to amend the Railway Labor Act.

U: Will not argee to revision, but will defend the principle of collective bargaining.

R: Ask for repeal of the provisions for reduced rates on government traffic.

U: The carriers are not entitled to this repeal, because of the benefits they receive from land grants. They seek to avoid legal obligation.

R: Ask for tax exemption.

U: No individual or corporation living under a democracy can be allowed to escape obligations. Evaders of legitimate taxation are disloyal to American democracy.

R: Give the Reconstruction Finance Corp. broad authority to make loans to roads.

U: Supported the proposal to relax requirements on loans to railroads. But new sources of loans will not solve the railway financial problem as will a policy of reduction of debt and interest rates.

R: Want consolidation by negotiation rather than by national planning, and the right to operate motor vehicles and vessels.

U: Opposes the establishment of giant monopolie in any industry, hence it opposes both consolidatic and the extension of the power of the railroad com panies.

R: Want the public to bear the total expen of the elimination of grade crossings and the i provement of navigable streams.

U: The elimination of grade crossings, etc., an asset both to the public and to the railroad Equity suggests that both parties share the expens

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HOW FREE IS IRELAND?

De Valera's "Victory" Opens a New Phase

R. PALME DUTT

DE VALERA, fresh from his agreement with Chamberlain, has now entered on a new five years of power in Eire, or Southern Ireland, with an absolute majority.

Events in this far extreme corner of Europe are not usually treated as a vital part of the international situation—although the experience of the last war showed clearly enough the strategic importance of Ireland in relation to Britain, an importance which is greater, not less, today.

But the treaty signed between De Valera and Chamberlain is more than a local agreement. It is, in reality, a strategic agreement in relation to international war prospects. It marks another strengthening of forces on the side of Chamberlain's line-up with fascism, and has also important bearing on Anglo-American relations. For this reason an estimate of the internal situation in Ireland in relation to this Chamberlain-De Valera united front is important for the future of British policy.

The present stage of the Irish struggle has also independent interest as an historic battleground of all the problems of the national and social struggle and their interrelation. Many American readers have close ties with Ireland and may be interested in a political estimate of present forces in Ireland, and the lessons of the recent elections, with the overwhelming victory of De Valera and defeat of labor.

The Chamberlain-De Valera agreement, which formally closed the six-year economic war between Britain and Ireland since De Valera came to power in 1932 and repudiated the land annuities, is the key to the present political situation in Ireland. This agreement covered:

(1) Final settlement of the land annuities by Ireland paying £10,000,000 to England, and withdrawing all counter claims for hundreds of millions in respect of English damages to Ireland.

(2) Revision of tariffs for mutual benefit; England ends the penal tariffs on Irish produce; Ireland is to revise the tariffs on English manufactured goods in such a way as to give English manufacturers "full opportunity of reasonable competition" in Ireland. This helps Irish agriculture, but is a threat to the new secondary industries in Ireland.

(3) Control of the coastal defense stations, Cobh, Berehaven, and Lough Swilly, previously occupied and maintained by British forces, handed over to Ireland. There are no written obligations, but the Irish government has made clear that it will undertake expenditure for their maintenance and strengthening.

This agreement, which did not touch on the question of partition, proclaims "friendship and good understanding" between England and Ireland.

Since the agreement, Irish government spokesmen have dropped mention of the republic (already by the December 1936 act, after the abdication, they had recognized British kingship over Ireland), and with regard to partition speak only of a friendly future settlement by the consent of the majority of the population of Northern Ireland. In present speeches the De Valera government ministers are making special appeals to "ex-unionists" (i. e., the representatives of the British connection), and speaking of the "ties of blood and kinship and common interest" between Britain and Ireland.

What lies behind this agreement, which thus apparently closes down the national struggle for complete independence of the Irish people, and establishes instead close cooperation of the rulers of Britain and Ireland?

Two factors may be traced. First, the economic situation. The British economic war during these six years has struck Ireland hard. The total of Irish trade fell from £101,000,000 in 1930 to £65,000,000 in 1937, exports falling from £45,000,000 to £22,000,000. The Irish Banking Commission's report on the economic situation was signed in March and presented in April just before the negotiations, and is understood to have presented a very black picture of the situation, showing the urgent need for a settlement of the conflict. De Valera is stated to have had it with him when he came to London, and to have found that Chamberlain already knew its contents. Its publication has been withheld during the elections, and, challenged on it, De Valera stated in the campaign that he had not yet had time to read it, and that arrears of government printing had delayed its publication.

The second factor is the international situation and foreign policy. This factor was decisive for Britain in wishing at this point to make a settlement with Ireland and draw the Irish government into concerted strategic plans. But there were also influences on the Irish side in the same direction. Vatican influences worked for this reconciliation in order to strengthen the fascist front in Europe. It was already significant that De Valera took the initiative in recognizing the Italian conquest of Abyssinia.

A further element in the situation, not publicly brought out, but undoubtedly of very great importance in Britain's plans, is the Anglo-American antagonism. The sharpening of this antagonism, and Britain's preoccupation with it, has been recently brought out by the interview Chamberlain granted Canadian and American journalists, and his admission that this was the undisclosed issue behind Eden's resignation.

British strategic anxiety over Ireland is not merely a reflection of the menacing European situation, but also, and perhaps primarily, of the Anglo-American antagonism. Britain is very actively occupied with strategic preparations in Ireland. In Northern Ireland (the seat of Londonderry, and where Ribbentrop paid his recent visit) there have been special military missions, and plans for the construction of a military aerodrome and aircraft factories.

In Southern Ireland no preparations were possible until the agreement could be reached. Today the strategic plans behind the agreement are kept secret. Although officially no obligations have been undertaken, in practice De Valera informed the Senate:

> It was necessary to put a little damper on what appeared to be undue optimism as to what results will come from the agreement. The people will have to bear some little extra expenditure with regard to defense.

He further stated that the Irish people, in undertaking this defense expenditure,

> . . . would indirectly be doing things to the advantage of Britain. Undoubtedly we are getting advantages from it, but so are the British—the British probably more.

Immediately after this agreement De Valera held the general election, and won for the first time an absolute majority (previously he had held power with the support of labor).

Fianna Fail, the government party of De Valera, won seventy-seven of the total 138 seats, an increase of eighteen, and 667,000 of the total 1,285,000 votes.

Fine Gael, the reactionary party of the big-business, banking, land, and higher-church forces and of the former English connection, led by Cosgrave, held forty-five seats, a loss of three, with 428,000 votes. The Labor Party lost four seats, and emerged with a total of only nine, on a basis of 128,000 votes. The remaining seats went to independents.

What does this result show? Does it mean that the new Anglo-Irish agreement has now satisfied the Irish people as the realization of their aims, and that the national struggle may be regarded as ended except for the remaining issue of partition?

This is the interpretation which British imperialist expression endeavors to give to the result. Comparison is made with the experience of South Africa, when, after the pre-

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vious coming over of Botha and Smuts, finally Herzog joined forces with the British imperialists.

But, in fact, this interpretation is certainly incorrect, and there may be sharp surprises in the future for those who hold it. The analogy with South Africa is false. In South Africa four-fifths of the population are disfranchised Africans. The unification of the exploiter minority of English imperialists and Boer "nationalists" is a unity against the African majority. But in Ireland the exploited masses are the Irish people themselves. Their struggle will inevitably go forward.

The election vote was undoubtedly a vote of confidence in De Valera and Fianna Fail. There is no question of their present popularity. But on what is that popularity based? It is a popularity based on the fact that De Valera has stood in the popular view as the embodiment of the national struggle against England, from 1916 onwards, through the struggle against the Free State Treaty and through the six years of economic war and pulling to pieces of the treaty (abolition of the Oath of Allegiance, abolition of the office of Governor-General, etc.). It further reflects the fact that the Fianna Fail government has carried through many social measures of a popular character, such as some beginning of redivision of land (about half a million acres), help to small farmers, unemployment assistance, a housing program, holidays with pay, etc.

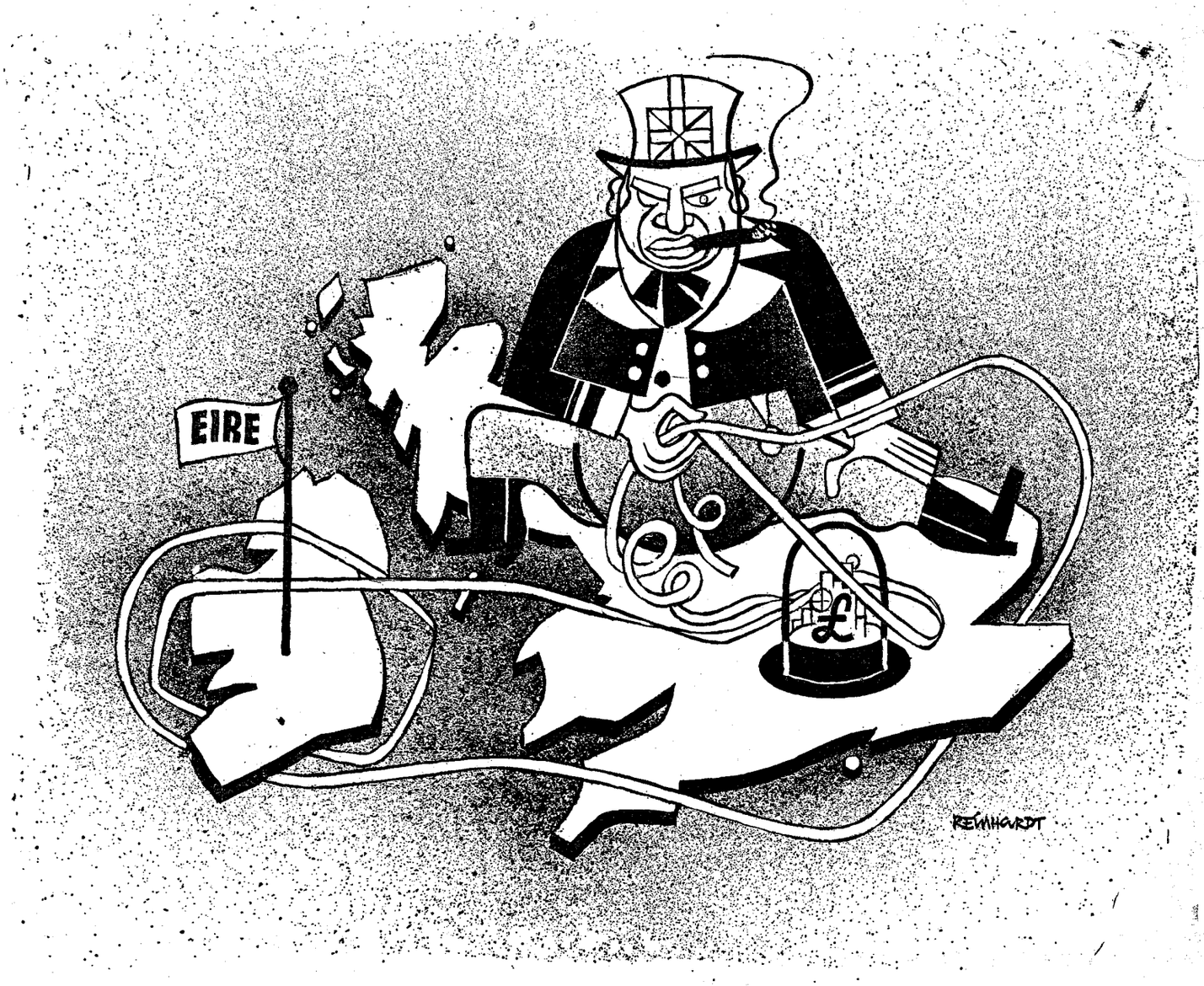
The reaction in Ireland is still represented by Cosgrave and his party of Fine Gael. Fine Gael still unites the big-business, pro-English, and near-fascist elements. Fianna Fail is based on the small farmers, small traders, and workers. The Irish people were determined to defeat the Cosgrave reaction, and plumped for Fianna Fail as their champions against the reaction.

The real failure in the election was that of labor, as well as of the left-nationalist and old-republican elements who sought to boycott it. But this failure was a reflection of extreme weakness of leadership and policy in the whole preceding period, as well as in the election—a situation which will not necessarily continue in the coming period in Ireland.

Twenty-five years ago Irish labor, in the heroic days of the leadership of Connolly and Larkin and the great Dublin struggle of 1913, was in the vanguard of the labor movement of Western Europe. It was the Irish working class, under militant leadership, that made the pace in the political situation, put the issue of the republic on the map, and with Connolly and the Citizen Army was the backbone of the Easter Rebellion in 1916.

Today there is undoubtedly a phase of heavy decline from this level. The leading role of labor was lost under the subsequent weak reformist leadership and passed over to middle-class nationalism. The Labor Party damned itself by supporting the Free State Treaty of 1921, which was maintained, with British aid, by the reactionary big-business forces who rallied behind Griffiths and Cosgrave. The national struggle against the treaty, the struggle of the small farmers against the land annuities, was led by the small middle-class elements represented by De Valera and Fianna Fail, who swept to power with mass support in 1932.

Labor today holds only nine seats out of 138. In all Dublin, with its overwhelming working-class population, labor has no representative. On the eve of the poll a gigantic mass demonstration of thirty thousand listened to De Valera; the Labor Party did not attempt to hold a meeting. Larkin, once the



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l of the Dublin masses, was defeated and t his seat as an Independent Laborite.

Socialist propaganda is practically non-ex- nt. The Labor Party avoids all mention Socialism, and officially describes its aim as just social order based on Christian teach- g." There is no labor press.

The remnants of the republicans are also veak at present as an organized movement, ind show signs of disintegration. A Repub- can Labor candidate stood for Dublin County and ended at the bottom of the poll. The national Wolfe Tone commemoration at Bodenstown was organized this year by the Irish Republican Army with direct participation of its formations in marching order; it was the smallest on record. The leadership of the IRA keeps to a completely abstract republican propaganda, despite the formal adoption of a social program, and makes no attempt to link up the republican struggle with the vital interests of the masses.

The power of the Catholic Church, always strong, has been very much built up and intensified in the recent period. De Valera egards himself as the representative of the hurch working to establish Catholic social eals in Ireland. The complete subservience the state to clerical domination is shown the official *Register of Prohibited Publications,* which includes the majority of well known international authors, such as Shaw, Wells, Gorky, Anatole France, Barbusse, Stefan Zweig, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Al- ous Huxley, Westermarck, Ilya Ehrenbourg, tc. The domination extends not only through Fianna Fail, Fine Gael, and the Republicans, ut also in practice through the Labor Party and trade unions. The Labor Party wrote officially to the Pope last year to protest its fidelity to the struggle against the "twin enemies," Communism and fascism.

Yet never was there so strong a basis for the advance of the mass struggle in Ireland, alike for complete national and for social liberation. What is the character of the "freedom" that the Irish people have won under middle-class national leadership?

The poverty is so terrible that the population still goes steadily down, despite the high birth and marriage rates. The population of 2,965,000 in 1936 was below the level of 2,971,000 in 1926, showing a net emigration of 169,000 during the decade. During the last two years thirty thousand a year have emigrated.

There are 105,000 unemployed out of a total industrial working class of 500,000; and the employed workers in the last year recorded, 1936-7, only averaged twenty-eight weeks of work in the year for men, and forty- wo weeks for women. The maximum unem- loyment pay for a man with a family of ive or more is 14s in a rural district, 17s6d n an urban district, and 23s in a country orough like Dublin. Average earnings of gricultural laborers fell from 24s6d in 1930 o 22s in 1937. Yet in the same period prices ose from 57 percent above 1914 to 70 percent, and are today higher than in England, the last return showing 73 percent above 1914 in February 1938, against 57 percent in England.

Housing shows 45 percent of the population of Dublin overcrowded, living more than two to a room, and 27 percent for the whole country (2,556 in Dublin living ten and over to a room).

Exploitation has heavily increased under the De Valera government. The census of production showed that, while the average earnings of the industrial workers fell by 13 percent between 1931 and 1936, the value of their output, calculated in terms of wholesale prices, increased by 38 percent. The official price index of stocks and shares has risen from 94.5 in 1934 to 106.7 in 1936 and 110.6 in the latest return for February 1938. Between 1931 and 1936 Guinness ordinary shares rose from 80s to 155s, Alliance Gas from 10s to 16s, Dublin Brick from 4s2d to 13s, Hammond Lane Foundry from 27s6d to 54s9d.

If we turn to agriculture, we find a no less striking picture. By the successive Land Purchase Acts up to 1933, fifteen million acres of the total seventeen million acres land area have been dealt with and made the property of the previous tenants. But this does not mean that the problem of land division is solved. Though the payment of land annuities to England is now canceled with the final lump payment of ten million pounds, half the land annuities are still collected by the De Valera government for its own needs. Inequality of division is still extreme between the 7,900 estates with over two hundred acres and the 75,000 holdings of under five acres. The present position *(1937 Statistical Abstract)* may be summed up as follows:

		Million-acres owned
236,000 small farmers	(under 30 acres)	2.9
112,000 " "	(30-100 acres)	5.9
29,000 large "	(over 100 acres)	6.1

Thus 63 percent of the farmers own under 20 percent of the land; 7.7 percent own over 40 percent. In addition, there are 139,000 landless agricultural laborers. Their statutory wages now fixed are 24s a week, or under $5, and in 1937 their actual earnings averaged 22s a week, or $4.50. The small farmers struggle hopelessly under a load of land charges, bank debts, and lack of credit for equipment, and seek to eke out their living with labor on the roads or seasonal migratory labor to Scotland.

It is evident that the situation provides the objective conditions for a powerful movement of the workers and small farmers, together with the town petty bourgeoisie, constituting the overwhelming majority of the population, for their urgent needs. The problem of realizing this is the problem of the present situation in Ireland.

The existing labor and republican leadership have not yet been able to find a way to mobilize and lead this movement of the masses.

The Labor Party placed itself in an extremely unfavorable position in the elections by allowing itself to be maneuvered into an appearance of being linked up with the reactionary Fine Gael against Fianna Fail. It was the combined vote of Fine Gael and Labor, on a Cosgrave motion (although on a justified issue), which unseated the De Valera government and brought on the elections. Labor directed its main propaganda against Fianna Fail, appearing to neglect the reactionary menace of Cosgrave and the near-fascist forces behind him, or to treat Fianna Fail and Fine Gael as equal enemies; and it directed its propaganda against Fianna Fail as a whole, without distinguishing the leadership from the masses of workers and small farmers who still support it.

In particular, Labor concentrated its propaganda on attacks, often offensive in character, against De Valera and Fianna Fail as "imperialist" and "national apostates"—a type of propaganda which, in view of the extremely vulnerable Labor record in the national struggle, had inevitably boomerang effects.

Nevertheless, the existing Labor vote remained remarkably stable, dropping only four thousand out of the total turnover of 82,000 votes to Fianna Fail. It was the loss of Fianna Fail second preferences from Labor that lost the Labor seats.

What, then, of the future in Ireland? De Valera called for a "strong government" and five years of power with an assured majority. He now has this. In what direction will he move?

Following the agreement with Chamberlain, with its undisclosed strategic obligations, he is likely to move closer to imperialism. The strategic obligations will require new expenditure and burdens on the people. The economic situation, and the recommendations of the majority report of the Banking Commission are likely to lead to new attacks on the standards of the people. In his speeches he has given ominous warnings of future measures in relation to the trade unions. While protesting that he is "not against trade unions," he has insisted that they must be "independent of politics," and advocated non-political "vocational organization" as the aim. In the new "corporate" basis of the Senate a first experiment in this direction has been attempted. It is clear where this leads, and where his clerical advisers are aiming to lead him—in the direction of clerical fascism of the Dollfuss-Schuschnigg type.

The beginnings of this development will, however, certainly arouse strong opposition. The organized working class in Ireland has militant traditions. Fianna Fail has a mass basis of membership, organized in the local Fianna Fail Clubs, which have already shown an active political role, often in opposition to the leadership. As the De Valera government reveals more fully its role, a process of differentiation is likely to develop within Fianna Fail. In this situation the reaction may turn to Cosgrave, General Mulcahy, and

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the near-fascist elements to endeavor to strike down the mass opposition. It is more probable that De Valera, from the force of circumstances, will draw closer to Cosgrave, while a powerful left wing will develop in Fianna Fail.

The menace to the Irish people in the present situation is serious and urgent. But at the same time the conditions are developing, if the political leadership can be realized, for the development of a broad mass front, based on the unity of the labor movement with the left wing or mass membership of Fianna Fail and the republican elements, and combining the national with the social struggle. The strengthening and revival of the labor movement is the essential first step to this. It is in the development of this process that the Communist Party of Ireland will be able to build its forces and eventually realize its role of leadership.

I SPEAK TO CATHOLICS

A Priest Raises His Voice for Spain

FATHER MICHAEL O'FLANAGAN

I HAVE come across the Atlantic Ocean to raise my voice on behalf of the cause of human liberty in Spain. The fight that is being waged in Spain today is like the fight that was waged in this country at the time of the American Revolution. The American Revolution was carried out by George Washington and the patriotic rank and file of the American people. They were opposed by the wealthy, privileged classes of the country supported by a foreign army. The part that General Franco is playing today in Spain was played by Lord Cornwallis at the time of the American Revolution. Those who are on the side of General Franco today would, if they had been alive at that time, be on the side of Cornwallis and King George III. All the hard, stupid, lying things they are saying today about the forces of the Spanish republic, they would be saying then about the forces of the young American republic.

The fight in Spain today is like the fight in Ireland in 1798. The men who are fighting for the liberty of Spain today are like the men who fought for the liberty of Ireland then. General Franco, the butcher of Spain today, is like Lord Castlereagh, the butcher of Ireland in 1798. General Franco in Spain today is like Oliver Cromwell in Ireland three hundred years ago. Just as Cromwell butchered the women and children in Drogheda and Werford in 1649, so Franco butchered the men and children of Guernica and Durango. He has kept on butchering them until his friend and all-powerful supporter, Pius XI, has been compelled to utter a word of reproach.

If you were alive in 1776 and if you had taken the side of England in America, would not your descendants today be rightly ashamed of you? If you had a great-grandfather who had endured the winter at Valley Forge and crossed the Delaware with George Washington, would you not be proud of him today? If you had one who was a traitor like Benedict Arnold, you would be ashamed of him today.

I did not come here in any light mood. I knew what I had to face. I was here a year ago on the same mission. I know what I had to face then. I expect to meet with more or less of the same thing now. I do not face it without a grave sense of responsibility.

My coming is not entirely due to my love and admiration of the heroic defenders of liberty in Spain. This war does not concern Spain alone. It concerns Europe as well and indeed the world as a whole. But the most intimate reason why I have come is concern for the good name and the welfare of my own Irish people. The Irish people have proved themselves great lovers of liberty in all part of the world. At home, in Ireland, they have fought for liberty. Here in America the played a noble part in the fight for liberty. They gave considerable help to more than on

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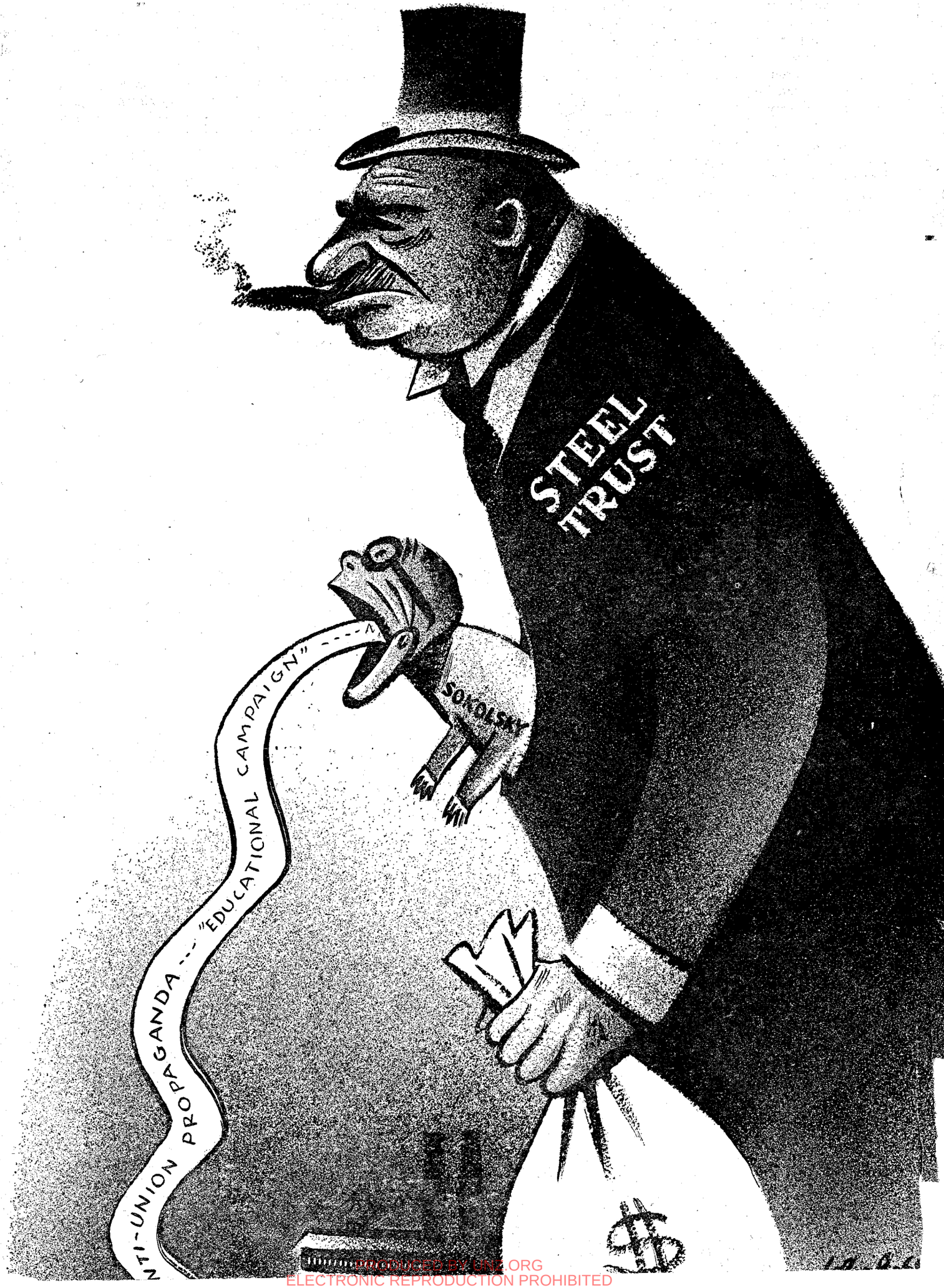

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of the republics of South America. You can imagine what a source of humiliation it is to an Irishman to see the great bulk of his race in America maneuvered into such a position that they are a bulwark of tyranny in Spain. Not merely that, but they are in danger of becoming the very spearhead of tyranny in America itself. How is it possible that a race that has shown such devotion to liberty in their own land of Ireland are now becoming the enemies of liberty in this land of America? It is all due to want of knowledge of the doctrines of the church to which the great majority of them belong. It could be remedied by another question in the Catholic catechism. That question should be: Is a Catholic bound to accept his politics from the Church? And the answer: No. A Catholic is not bound to accept his politics from the Catholic Church. I say then to the Catholics who have come here to listen to me tonight, you are not bound to follow the leadership of your pastor in political affairs. Rather, it is your duty to make up your own mind, and pay no more attention to the views of your pastor than you would to the views of any other man of equal political intelligence. It is also your duty to resent the introduction of political discussion into your church and to refuse to buy at or near the door of the church any newspaper or other publication that dabbles in political propaganda. God's house is a house of prayer and should never be degraded into a conventicle of secular ambition and political intrigue.

I say to the priests who have come to listen to me: you are not bound to follow the leadership of your bishop in political affairs. Rather is it your duty to form your own mind and pay no more attention to the views of your bishop than the views of any other man of equal political acumen or the reverse. You may wonder why I say "the reverse." But look at what the bishops did in Austria. They acted with about as much political gumption as a pet rabbit. Many times during the history of Ireland we have had an exhibition of the same type of ecclesiastical mentality that has recently been displayed by Cardinal Innitzer and the hierarchy of Austria. I say then to the Catholic priest: you too are a citizen. Do not allow your citizenship to be impaired or distorted. In the exercise of the duties of your citizenship prove yourself worthy of the freedom of the country in which you live. Remember the rule laid down by St. Augustine. "In things that are necessary, unity; in things that are doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity." Religion is one of the things that is necessary. When you speak in church, whenever you speak in your official capacity as a priest, confine yourself to an exposition of the truths of revealed religion. Keep politics far away from the sacred precincts of your church; not merely the whispering politics of the sacristy and the hinting politics of the pulpit, but also the stammering politics of the porch.

I say to the bishops of the Catholic Church, you are not bound to follow the political leadership of the Pope. If you consider yourself bound to follow the leadership of the Pope in political affairs, you are unworthy of citizenship in any country in the world except Vatican City. If you wish to engage in political discussion, let it be on the same ground as any other citizen. You have no right to use your ecclesiastical authority as a means of imposing your views upon those who are subject to you. Their subjection to you does not extend beyond ecclesiastical affairs. They are bound to resist you as a tyrant should you stretch the limits of your authority beyond its legitimate sphere. If your intelligence is so dim, or so warped, that you wish to pray for the success of Franco, do so in all humility in the secrecy of your own heart and in the privacy of your own chapel, for the history of the Church is full of examples of bishops and of cardinals who took the wrong side in times of doubt and of crisis.

To the Pope, I say: remember that you are the infallible head of the Church. When you make a solemn pronouncement on matters of faith and morals addressed to the whole church, there are three hundred millions of people all over the world who listen to your voice as the very voice of God Himself. Be careful not to abuse that position as some of your predecessors have abused it in the past. You have no infallibility in political affairs. When you take sides in the Spanish war, you have nothing to guide you except your own natural intelligence and whatever advice you may get from your cardinals, some of whom, like the Cardinal Primate of Spain, may come to you with all the fanatical partisanship that comes of taking sides in a civil war, and others who can hardly fail to be under the influence of Mussolini. Do not forget that some of your predecessors in the past took the wrong side. A Pope took the side of England at the tim of the American Revolution and by his influ ence on the minds of the French Catholics c Canada deprived this country of half the cont nent of North America. A long line of Pop took the side of England against Ireland. Fo four hundred years every Catholic archbisho appointed by the Pope to rule the See of Dublin was an Englishman. Not merely wa he an Englishman, but in every instance h took an active and important part on the sid of the invaders and against the rights an liberties and often against the very lives o the faithful, patient, and long-suffering people of Ireland. In our own day a Pope condemned by name the patriot Fenians of Ireland and another Pope took the side of the landlords against the downtrodden Catholic rural population of Ireland.

If the political influence of the Church can be thrown into the scales on the wrong side in America and in Ireland, why must we take it for granted that it is on the right side in Spain? Should we not rather suspect that being on the side of the tyrant in America anc in Ireland, it is more than likely that the sid it is on in Spain is also the side of the tyran

The Catholic Irish people of America mu feel very unhappy at finding themselves compelled to be on the side of Franco in Spain. It places them in strange company indeed. For if they are on the side of Franco ir they must also be on the side of Spain. If they are on the side of Spain, how can they avoid being c of Hitler in Austria? If they are of Hitler in Austria, then they r on the side of Japan in China. Every victory for Mussolini in Spain will encourage and strengthen the attack of Japan upon China. The one great argument upon which the enemies of the Spanish republic rely is that Russia is on the side of the republic. If that is a sound argument in reference to Spain, it must also be a good argument in reference to China If Russian help proves that the Spanish republic is in the wrong, then Russian help must also prove that the Chinese republic is in the wrong. If Russia is on the right side in Chin is not that an indication that the side Russi is on in Spain is also the right side? Russia it is said, has turned its back upon God. I that is so, what has caused Russia to tu against God? Is it not the distorted imag of God that was presented to the people of Russia by the type of Christianity represented by the czarist Orthodox Church of Russia? In the days of the Czar I never heard one good word said about the church. Today it is spoken of as if it were a part of our own Catholic Church. Today, Russia is doing the work of God in China and in Spain. I believe that the real God who rules the universe will smile upon the people in Russia who are doing His will, even though they have been shocked into infidelity by the evil deeds that were done in His name, rather than upon those who prate about His name in order to cover up the iniquity of their actions.

★

UNEMPLOYED SPRING SONG

Season of buds, when we peel our winter
rigouts,
And give our careful bodies to the breeze,
Hello! The grass sun signals, prepare
To obey the signs that keep us off the grass.

Curse the winter days, they boned, bled,
Numbed us in doorways, iced up our jaws;
We're powerful happy now for talking,
and glad
To curse spring too, and the goddam grass,
because

A hollow gut is a hollow gut no less
For nymph-time. Pan forgive us and gods
of love,
If forgetful we suck our teeth in the rites
of spring
As we sucked our teeth in winter's carnival.

PAUL SHEPHERD.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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★

Warning to Progressives

I voted nationally always, and for progress. I never cast a sectional vote. I never demagogued on our serious questions, and stood for civil liberties. I have no regrets. There is not a word I have said, not a vote I cast that would not be the same f I had the opportunity.

MAURY MAVERICK of Texas made this statement on learning that he had not been renominated for Congress. He lost to [illegible] Kilday by 548 votes out of a total of

And the cause of progress has been
of a vigorous and consistent legis-
) headed the bloc of progressives
Dealers in the last Congress.

ck was defeated by a well organized, reactionary, cunningly directed political organization, the Quin machine. Kilday simulated loyalty to the New Deal but pledged not to be a "rubber stamp." He gathered about him every reactionary, every anti-administration force, Jack Garner, and the AF of L official leadership. Because Maverick fought for labor, he won the enmity of William Green, who resents any gesture of tolerance toward the CIO. In a non-industrial state, the labor vote did not account for a great proportion of the ballots cast, nor did Green's opposition vitally affect organized labor. But his refusal to support Maverick ve the opposing candidate a cue—in a backward community, anti-CIO speeches had their appeal to the uninformed middle-class voters.

The Texas primary points the danger of disunity. The nomination of W. Lee O'Daniel for governor assures this roistering demagogue's election in the fall. His campaign discussed no issue but depended on a swing band and crooning. If he had been opposed by a candidate who seriously discussed basic issues, the results could have been different.

Maverick's defeat is lamentable. But it n serve as a warning and a lesson to progressives in those states still to hold primary elections. There can never be too great unity among workers, farmers, and middle-class people. Maverick's defeat can be offset by electing ten new progressives to Congress to carry on his work.

What Price Entente?

ONCE more an appreciation of the true nature of the so-called Franco-British entente is essential for an understanding of coming events in Europe. The cables are extremely confusing on this key phase of world politics. When the entente first took concrete form back in April, during the Daladier-Bonnet mission to London, it was widely held that the fascist axis had suffered a decisive setback. At that time we warned against this easy optimism. In return for British assurances of military cooperation in case of war, France had to surrender practically all of its remaining independence in foreign policy. As a direct result of that first visit, the Czech situation went from bad to worse, until the critical May 21 weekend, and, still later, the Pyrenean frontier was closed to Spain.

The same question now arises in even more acute form. Behind the scenes of King George's visit to Paris, negotiations between Daladier, Bonnet, and Halifax strengthened the "entente." From a military viewpoint, the French could hardly demand more than the subsequent statement by Hore-Belisha, the British Secretary of War, "It looks as though the two General Staffs are as one." But the British did not give any military prizes away without getting some political commitments in return. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the entente must be judged by its political rather than its military aspects.

From the political viewpoint, the outlook is extremely disquieting. Forces have been set in motion which, unless stopped in time, will lead to another Nazi attempt against Czechoslovakia between the middle of August and the beginning of September. The appointment of Lord Runciman as "adviser" in the Sudeten dispute can only encourage the wire-pullers in Berlin to further provocations and more extreme demands. It would be folly to believe that the Nazis will be satisfied with anything short of a political monopoly in the Sudeten as a preliminary to the total dismemberment of the Czechoslovak state. In the special regional parliament proposed by the government for the Sudeten area, the Nazis seek guarantees of a majority. The Runciman mission is itself a reflection upon Czech sovereignty and the Czechs would reject it if they could. Not a week had passed after the King's visit and this effort to undermine Czech resistance was brought forward in London!

After the British Parliament recesses Chamberlain may even enter into direct negotiations with Hitler for a German complement to the Anglo-Italian pact. The negotiations in Paris were intended to neutralize France for this aim. Chamberlain's allies in France, among whom must be counted Foreign Minister Bonnet, take the position that France can afford to sacrifice everything in favor of a complete "understanding" with Britain. Chamberlain has now presented France with this "understanding" and it depends upon the French left whether the disastrous sacrifice will be made in coming months.

The Loyalists Advance

THE Spanish republican army has crossed the Ebro in a surprise offensive which can change the entire face of the war if it continues as well as it started. Seventeen miles along a fifty-mile stretch were gained in the very first day of the drive. No matter how anxious Franco and his foreign "advisers" may be to break through Viver on the Valencia front, this advance cannot be ignored if it continues to move along. Reenforcements from the Southeast will be needed to stiffen the rebel lines in the North, an operation which may very well paralyze the threat against Sagunto and Valencia.

The insurgents launched a drive on the Estremadura front in an effort to break loyalist resistance in the Levante. Their advance was similarly swift and efficient but the republican command does not seem troubled by it. It may, however, prove very dangerous, depending on the situation on the other two fronts. At present it seems clear that a substantial Catalan advance and a real stalemate in the Levante will cause Franco plenty of worry, barring any substantial activity in Estremadura.

Sokolsky's Payoff

THE Senate Civil Liberties Committee hearing last week revealed that George E. Sokolsky got $32,008 for "services" to Little Steel corporations and the National Association of Manufacturers, between June 1936 and February 1938. Part of it was paid by the steel employers' public-relations firm, and part direct. The "services" consisted of Sokolsky's expert advice, aid in preparing booklets, talks to radio audiences and to such gatherings as one of Youngstown steel workers, secretly paid for by the open shoppers, but held "under the auspices" of the Foremen's Club having no declared connection with the employers.

Of course, NEW MASSES, wallowing in the Moscow gold with which Sokolsky's tribe is always showering us, and hence knowing all along how these things work,

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long ago suspected how it worked with Sokolsky. Particularly when Sokolsky, pretending that he was telling all, wrote a column about it in the *Herald Tribune* of Dec. 20, 1937. When the La Follette committee exposed him, Sokolsky rejoined that it was "no surprise" to him. He had expected it—and, you get the point, you also should have expected and, hence, discounted it. He had often told radio audiences that his anti-CIO harangues were "under the auspices" of the NAM *and* that his views nevertheless were "his own without restriction." He had *not* told that his anti-union views had assumed highly increased value to the manufacturers with the rise of the CIO, and constituted just the line they needed to alibi their murderous opposition to the new unions—a line, however, which they needed to have put forward by someone other than themselves. Sokolsky had *not* told that the manufacturers offered to buy him *as impartial journalist* and found him capable and willing to sell himself *as journalist* to put that line forward as precisely what it was not—something unbought. He had told, in short, just enough to conceal the essential truth about the matter.

What is important here is not so much the revelation of Sokolsky's down-to-the-marrow corruption, as the further proof of the corruption of the reactionary institutions of American journalism. For, days after the exposure, we find Sokolsky, the exposed open-shop mercenary, spreading his poisonous piffle in his same three-column spot in the *Trib*—together with an editorial full of disingenuous spoofing about "What is pressure?" The worst kind, the *Trib* declares with brazen coyness, comes from a "curious group" of "public-relations counsel." However—notice the *Trib's* selection—"most" of this group are now in Washington, seeking to exert pressure on behalf of—the New Deal! And nary a word about that one of the group who, though exposed, is still *using the Tribune itself* to continue his work for steel and the NAM.

The Outstretched Hand

EARL BROWDER'S "Message to Catholics" was quoted at length from the pulpit of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, last Sunday. The event signalized an important stage in the development of progressive thought in the United States.

In France such mutual consideration of Catholic and Communist policies has been proceeding for over two years. Various misconceptions are being eliminated, both honest ones and those lies fostered by reaction which immemorially have been used to confuse men of good will. Such mutual cooperation has immeasurably strengthened the People's Front in France. It cannot fail further to cement the assembling forces of the American democratic front.

The perceptive minds of the Catholic Church, we feel sure, will recognize clearly the need for such unity among all democratic Americans. For it was the ignoring of the necessity of such a broad defense of democracy in Italy, Germany, and Austria which brought such untold suffering to the Catholic Church with the rise of fascism. In the United States, where Catholics are already cooperating with Communists in the trade-union movement, their economic life has been healthier than in those countries where Catholic trade unions, by their separatist policies, aided the enemies of industrial democracy. In America, too, where Catholics' freedom of political affiliation has never been questioned and where Catholic political parties have not withdrawn their support from the great progressive political movements of their fellow citizens, the Catholic Church has flourished, materially and spiritually.

The rejection of the Red-baiting lies which have confused many American Catholics and which have weaned them away from the true morality of their Church, is a Catholic program earnestly to be sought. The Catholic Church's recognition of the existence of Communist Catholic cooperation in our democracy and the Communists' further understanding of the motives which inspire Catholic democrats open up a new road of democratic progress.

Three Years After

JULY 25 is a date which, with the passage of time, is destined to loom ever more significant in the annals of humanity's eternal struggle for a larger, freer, and more civilized existence. For it was on this day, exactly three years ago, that the now famous Seventh World Congress of the Communist International met in Moscow to hammer out the line of the democratic front which has played such a decisive role in halting the advance of fascism throughout the world, and which, if consistently pursued in the future, is bound to ensure fascism's final defeat.

What would France have been by now were it not for the Popular Front? And Spain? And China? And Czechoslovakia? And the whole of Europe? Yes, and our own United States if the people had not rallied around President Roosevelt? Even where the fascists thought they would have a walkover, they have been forced to change their minds more than a little. The lesson is clear: in whichever country the democratic masses form a solid united front, the fascists are checked. Make this policy effective internationally, and the fascists will be routed.

The accomplishment of the democratic front would have been even greater had it not been for sabotage by the reactionary circles in all the democratic countries. In dread of the united masses, the fascist-minded in those democratic countries, as has been pointed out by Litvinov in his recent speech before his Leningrad constituency, "are ready to betray the national interest to help the cause of fascism." The traitors must be exposed and swept aside. The fight for jobs, security, democracy, and peace must and shall be won.

A Notable Conference

ELEVEN HUNDRED delegates from forty-two countries have just met in Paris at a World Conference for Action on the Bombardment of Open Towns and the Restoration of Peace. Among the steps decided upon were: establishment of a Peace Hospital in China; immediate steps for sending food ships and trains to republican Spain and China; issuance of a call for an "organizational day" and a "solidarity week"; and various measures to boycott the aggressors.

The resolution on Spain protested the closing of the Pyrenean frontier and demanded that the democratic governments "reconsider the Spanish problem on the basis of the League Covenant if the foreign combatants are not withdrawn within the time fixed by the London committee."

The conference represented the broadest united front of distinguished democrats and peace lovers the world over. The spirit pervading all the speeches and resolutions was best expressed by the Catholic Bishop Mangord who, in a moving appeal to Catholics in all countries, declared that he would not be true to his faith if he did not do everything to prevent unjust aggression and the bombardment of open towns, as well as by Jacques Duclos, secretary of the Communist Party of France, who in a powerful speech urged the delegates to "follow the example of the great Soviet democracy in refusing to knuckle to the Japanese blackmail. The union of the democracies of France, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union can force back the fascist aggressors. . . . We must end criminal complacency with aiding the fascists; peace and liberty depend on this."

And while Chamberlain was maneuvering to sell Czechoslovakia out to Hitler, the conference passed a unanimous resolution congratulating the Central European democracy on its firm stand of May 21. The conference was important and symptomatic; it was front-page news—but not in the capitalist press.

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Slandering the CIO

REP. CLARE E. HOFFMAN of Michigan cannot be sued for libel for any speech he makes in Congress. He is free to describe a CIO union—to use his own paraphrase—as "controlled by Communists or by those who are criminals or have been engaged in criminal activities."

But when a company reprints Hoffman's speech and then circulates it secretly among employees, at the same time committing other acts obviously intended to intimidate those men about to join the union, there is some ground to speculate where "free speech" ends and license begins. The Hoffman pamphlet which the Muskin Shoe Co. of Maryland passed to its employees was not distributed with the intent of giving workers an expression of impartial opinion. It was used to misrepresent the union and to coerce workers from becoming members of that union. As a result, it had the same effect as a warning against the union delivered personally by a foreman or superintendent would have had. No one has questioned, as Edwin S. Smith of the National Labor Relations Board pointed out, the right of the board to forbid oral intimidation. In the same manner, it is logical to protect workers from written coercion. This is what the NLRB order against distribution of the pamphlet accomplished.

The issue is hardly one of free speech or free press. The NLRB has merely prevented undercover pressure from being brought against employees wishing to join a union.

Martin's Farcical Trial

HOMER MARTIN has given the whole show away. When the executive board of the United Automobile Workers met in Detroit to "try" the four vice presidents arbitrarily suspended by Martin, a delegation of non-faction local presidents asked to be allowed to sit in the trial as observers. Martin refused in a typically hysterical manner. And his refusal was enforced by attacks on the local representatives by goon squads of thugs stationed in the international offices of the union.

As we go to press, the farcical trial has just started. It will undoubtedly be a cut-and-dried affair. Martin and a few of his supporters accuse; Martin and his friends hear the evidence; Martin and his followers will hand down judgment. It doesn't take clairvoyance to predict the outcome of the trial.

By forbidding observers at the trial, Martin admits its character. He is opposed by the overwhelming majority of the automobile union—both the rank and file and the elected local officers. The charges against the four suspended men who have built the union are wordy and varied, but they add up to opposition of Martin's high-handed autocracy and abuse of his position as president of the union, plus disgust with the factionalism to which Martin and his Lovestoneite advisers have obstinately clung.

The membership has clearly expressed its desire for CIO intervention to prevent Martin's destruction of the automobile union. Moreover, the majority has called for a special convention if necessary. That the suspended officers will be expelled by Martin seems a foregone conclusion. But there the struggle for democracy in the union only starts. It is a major fight against disruption and destruction of a vital section of the CIO. In that fight the majority seek the support and good will of all other organized workers and their progressive allies.

The Fansteel Decision

OVER a year ago, the Fansteel Metallurgical Corp., of North Chicago, discharged eighty-three employees for union activities. The National Labor Relations Board, finding that the company had no valid grounds for the dismissals, ordered the company to reinstate all of the men and to pay sixty-seven of them back wages amounting to $70,000.

What complicated matters, in the eyes of the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, to which the NLRB decision was appealed, was that *after* the company discharged the eighty-three men some of them participated in a sitdown strike. The court set aside the NLRB ruling. In the court's opinion, the charge that the sitdowners broke the law gave the company the right to fire its employees.

The decision is important. It allows anti-union companies to provoke workers into defensive action and then to claim that it dismissed them not for union activities but for the action into which they had been goaded. The decision puts a premium on refusals of companies to abide by the Wagner act in the hope that employees will attempt to protect their jobs. The companies can then turn about and give the subsequent actions of the discharged men as their excuse for firings.

The general counsel of the NLRB has advised the board to appeal the case to the United States Supreme Court. It is worth noting that a recent Roosevelt appointee to the circuit court, Judge Walter Treanor, wrote a dissenting opinion. "The striking employees paid the penalty for their resistance of the officers of the law," he stated, referring to contempt of court sentences served by strikers who ignored a court order to evacuate the Fansteel buildings. He added:

> The National Labor Relations Board had no jurisdiction over that question. It does have jurisdiction over the case presented by the unfair labor practices of the petitioner . . . and the question for decision by this court is whether the order of the board, made in performance of its duties under the Labor Act, was within its statutory power to make on the basis of the findings which were supported by substantial evidence. . . . I think it was.

Trust-Busting Hollywood

THE first important result of the happy choice of Thurman W. Arnold as Assistant Attorney General may be seen in the civil anti-trust action filed by his office against eight major motion picture producers, twenty-five subsidiary or associated corporations, and 132 individual executives, comprising the whole phalanx of Hollywood tycoonery, from Merlin H. Aylesworth to Darryl Zanuck. The action, designed to divorce production, distribution, and exhibition phases of the multi-million-dollar industry, is not only one of the largest trust-busting endeavors ever undertaken by the government, but it is an optimistic sign for audiences and small theater-owners as well. Mr. Arnold's revelation that "65 percent of all pictures produced from the selection of the story to the final showing at the theater" are directly controlled by the defendants largely explains the discomfiture of film audiences with the quality of the movies. Monopoly-produced films, like monopoly-produced hams, tend to be of inferior quality.

An idea of the feeling toward the big companies by the independent theater-owner may be gained from an article in the authoritative *Variety:* "scores of independents look for relief from their troubles [block-booking, high rentals, discriminatory playing dates, inferiority of films] in only one direction—the government. Exhibitors, being very much the same as other American voters and taxpayers, have seen at first hand what the Washington administration is doing through AAA, WPA, and other alphabetical agencies." The initiative of the Assistant Attorney General is a New Deal answer to this hope.

One characteristic touch of the subterranean Arnold humor appears in his press statement, announcing the indictments. Divorcing production and distribution from exhibition, he said, "can be accomplished only through an equity decree which will require the major companies to divest themselves either of ownership of the theaters or of production and distribution facilities." Hollywood's choice in this dilemma is clear, but we shall see interesting court proceedings before that stage is reached.

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Forsythe's Page

A Corner in Culture

THE truth is that I'm not a good reporter and I'm dubious about other reporters. The gentlemen who make a hurried trip through Europe, reporting the exact state of public opinion in Yugoslavia and Poland after a day's stay in the capital of each, are my idols. I don't understand how they do it. When I go through a country or through a state in this country, I come out with a feeling of complete ignorance. I know just what somebody has told me and that is all. As a consequence I'm among the great hedgers of the world. Whenever I state an opinion about conditions in Texas, I immediately qualify it. If my compatriots would do the same, it might be better for history, even if worse for circulation.

This is preliminary to saying that I have been traveling again. My generalization for this trip is that New York has sucked the country dry. I mean culturally. If I should hear after the publication of this that there is a thriving group of poets in Dallas, Tex., I will accept it gladly without allowing it to influence my opinion. I still think it is one of the major tragedies of America that everything artistic immediately gravitates to New York. It is true that there is an occasional genius to be found in Joliet, Ill., or in Webster Grove, Mo., but in general it may be said that the culture of this country is centered in an area around New York with a radius of not more than one hundred miles.

The condition is made plainer by the fact that it was not always true. There was a time when Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and Joaquin Miller formed the nucleus of an important San Francisco colony. St. Louis once had men like Theodore Dreiser, Augustus Thomas, and William Marion Reedy. At one period there was every indication that Chicago was about to institute a literary movement. It had Sherwood Anderson, Carl Sandburg, Ben Hecht, and Maxwell Bodenheim. Critics like Burton Rascoe and Harry Hansen were functioning, and there were magazines such as the *Little Review* and *Poetry,* both of which had great influence in their time.

The literary colony of San Francisco now consists entirely of William Saroyan, who is less a colony than a natural phenomenon such as a tidal wave. Chicago has good writers but the trend is evident when you see the best of the new ones, Richard Wright, making his home in New York. The pride of St. Louis is Temple Bailey, although the more esthetic members of that community will remember that Josephine Johnson is around the premises somewhere. When it comes to artistry that fine city depends almost entirely on such men as Fitzpatrick, the great cartoonist, and Joe Jones, the mural painter.

As for Hollywood, men have been known to weep at the mention of it. The amount of human material in that exciting place is enough to create masterpieces from now till Judgment Day but if anything better than a four-star screen triumph has ever come out of Southern California, I'll eat it. You may think that a four-star screen triumph is enough, but you're wrong. Anybody who thinks that because art has been embalmed on a roll of celluloid, it is as lasting as anything between the covers of a book need only visit *The Sheik* or even *The Birth of a Nation* to be disillusioned. When we speak of art, we are still forced to mean literature, painting, and music; and in those respects Hollywood is as badly off as Oskaloosa, Ia. There are art galleries, there are symphony orchestras, there are people of taste and intelligence, but creatively Hollywood is sterile.

What causes it I don't know. It has been laid to the effects of money but that can't be the reason in the case of the many excellent young writers in that section who are glad enough if they can get an occasional meal. Not everyone in Hollywood is in the big dough. As for Los Angeles, the poverty is almost as appalling as that of London. So it most certainly is not the effect of money, although that undoubtedly enters into it. They make a point too of the climate and there are experts who lay great stress on that factor in art. As I write this I am sitting in a hotel room in Hollywood and it is hot and I most certainly don't want to create. Later in the afternoon I will go up to the house of a friend and we will sit on the grass in his yard and look down over the town and I would dare anybody to write a decent line or utter a significant word in such circumstances.

However, there is the corresponding fact that Hollywood is doing more in a liberal way at just this very moment than any other part of the country. The change since my first trip three years ago is unbelievable. The number of people who are working for good causes is large, and the effectiveness of the work is high. It is the center of anti-fascist activity in this country and in many respects the most important center. When a movie star of international reputation takes a stand on social matters, it counts. We are wrong in considering them great political figures because they have shown courage in humanitarian ways but we can't exaggerate their influence. The real work is done by persons of less fame and I must say for them that they bring such energy to it that the theory of climate seems quite dispelled.

Having admitted this, I am thrown back on my original query: Why not in Hollywood, with all that talent? If anything, this place has sucked New York dry, and yet the results are pitiful. There have been a few cheesy books and an occasional intelligent article and a play or two which have been something short of magnificent—and that is all. Not only does it ruin artists who are living in Hollywood but it seems to put the curse of God on them when they leave. One breath of that air and they start collapsing. I feel it now.

The real reason for New York's dominance is that most of the publishing houses are there, but this is an inevitable circumstance which is true in all countries. Edinburgh was once a literary center but it has long surrendered to the superior power of London. Paris may not be all of France but it is all in an artistic way. Essentially, I think it's a good thing. It makes literature national rather than regional and I have no patience with the Santa Fe idea which would have the country parceled out in little districts. All I say is that because New York is so important, things are not what they might be elsewhere. The result is that living in Houston, Tex., would be hard, despite the symphony orchestra and the ship channel to Galveston. It must be equally difficult in Seattle and Birmingham.

Having gone this far, I will now pause for the hollering. Nothing irritates a community more than the suspicion that it is not perfect. The loyalty of the burghers is beyond belief. I have stopped in little New Mexican towns so hopeless looking that a decent lizard wouldn't be caught in the place and have been subjected to a wave of sympathy because I lived in a hell hole like New York City. But, ladies and gents, my pals, I'm not knocking the rest of the country; I'm merely saying how unfortunate it is that New York has this power of absorption. The loyal citizens of other cities will deny that they lack virtue and will point to their galleries and boulevards and concerts, but that doesn't answer the question. There are a lot of performers around but whenever a creator appears, he begins looking up timetables almost immediately. It is all very well for the Californians to say that their hearts are in the Sierra, but their eyes are peeled almost painfully on Fourth Avenue, Manhattan.

Don't ask me what to do about it; there probably isn't anything that can be done. It's a situation, and as a lousy reporter, I report it. My next trip isn't going to be so pleasant, I'm afraid, but crusaders always expect that. Keep that door open, New York; I may barely be able to make it in advance of the flying boots.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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KENTUCKY'S CROONING TORY

A Primary of National Importance

JOHN LAIRD

NEXT week's primary in Kentucky will reveal to a waiting nation whether the AF of L, CIO, Railroad Brotherhoods, and all other progressive forces of a state combined with a strong presidential endorsement can defeat a razzle-dazzle Southern demagogue backed by all the tory forces in the country. If the first-named forces win, liberals can feel more confident about the outcome of the 1938 elections.

Alben Barkley, Roosevelt's leader in the Senate, is pitted against "Happy" Chandler, Kentucky's bull-throwing, lie-crooning governor, in a knock-down, drag-out campaign or the state's Democratic senatorial nomination. The primary, to be held August 6, promises to be the year's most interesting. It is probably Kentucky's bitterest political fight since the gubernatorial campaign of 1899, which was climaxed by the assassination of William Goebel, the governor-elect. Both men are stumping the state at a terrific rate, each making six or more speeches a day. The liberal and progressive forces are squarely behind Barkley, while Wall Street's representatives are going the limit for Chandler. They know that the defeat of Barkley would be the heaviest blow the Roosevelt administration could suffer in any election this year.

The voters of Kentucky know the President wants Barkley returned to the Senate, for he told them so himself on his recent visit to their state. Roosevelt spoke in the Senate Democratic leader's behalf at Covington, Louisville, and Bowling Green. He gave the senator no mere pat on the back but raised him fully and unqualifiedly.

Chandler is trying to persuade the voters he's still the same New Dealer they elected to office three years ago, but he's kidding nobody. He'll get a lot of votes, but they won't be from the same people who voted for him in his last campaign. "Happy" is an extremely ambitious demagogue, capable of anything. He's come a long way in a hurry. But by what methods!

Albert Benjamin Chandler was born July 4, 1898, at Corydon, Ky., a rural mailman's son. He attended Corydon High School and Transylvania College, graduating in 1921. He spent 1918 in the United States Army. He lasted only a year at Harvard Law School then got his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Kentucky in 1924 and hung out his shingle in Versailles, Ky. He became master commissioner of the Woodford County Circuit Court in 1928 and was elected to the State Senate in 1929. But chronological history can't do justice to Happy Chandler. His extra-curricular activities are much too fascinating.

He went through the University of Kentucky's law school as a piano-playing jazz-band leader with a sideline of coaching the Centre College football team. He retained his association with the once famous "Praying Colonels" until 1927. His varied contacts gave him the opportunity to greet the multitudes, and he quickly became widely known. With his following he had no trouble getting into the Legislature. Once there he assiduously cultivated Ruby Laffoon, a rising power. Ben Johnson, long an outstanding figure in Kentucky politics, singled out "Happy" as a sure vote-getter and pushed him for lieutenant governor.

His platform had one plank—*Sonny Boy;* he traipsed over the hills and valleys of the state with a single purpose, to croon *Sonny Boy* to every voter. He was elected.

Once in office, "Happy" made the front pages daily. By applying the governor's appointive power every time Laffoon stepped across the state line, he racked up a grand total of 597 honorary Kentucky Colonels. "Happy's" business interests didn't seem to suffer from the competition his civic duties afforded: *Who's Who in Law* lists him as receiver for the Inter-Southern Life Insurance Co., of Louisville, in 1932, and as an attorney for the American Life and Accident Insurance Co., of Louisville, in 1933; *Who's Who in America* furnishes the additional information that he an organizer of the Kentucky Home Life Insurance Co., of Louisville, in 1932.

Eventually Chandler parted company with Laffoon. Ruby, an old-line Democrat, became a raucous Roosevelt heckler and broke with the New Deal. He slapped a 3 percent sales tax on everything sold in the state from hamburgers to machine guns. The people of Kentucky broke with Ruby. Kentucky governors can't succeed themselves. Laffoon decided Highway Commissioner Thomas S. Rhea would be his successor and would be nominated by a convention. Other leading Kentucky Democrats including Barkley and Robert W. Bingham, ex-ambassador to England and leading Louisville newspaper publisher, couldn't stomach Rhea and demanded a primary election. They enlisted Roosevelt's assistance and the President wrote a widely publicized letter indicating his hope that the Kentucky Democrats would choose their candidate by a primary. Governor Laffoon decided to proceed with the convention, ignoring Roosevelt.

Shortly after the convention had designated Rhea, the governor took his candidate to Washington to unveil him before the President and the national leaders. As soon as he was out of the state, Lieutenant Governor Chandler called the Legislature into special session and enacted a compulsory primary law. Laffoon rushed back, too late. By using his patronage Laffoon forced through an amendment providing for a run-off primary if no candidate secured a majority. A hectic primary found Rhea the winner, but without a majority; Chandler was a close second. Ruby had slit his own throat.

"No state sales tax—Economy," was the Chandler campaign cry as he forged political alliances with the eliminated candidates and won the run-off by 25,000 votes. With the same slogan, with a campaign featuring a live rooster for a campaign emblem, and with plenty of whooping for the New Deal, "Happy" defeated King Swope, the Republican candidate, 556,262 to 461,104. While electing Chandler the voters also indicated the type of administration they desired. An amendment to the state constitution to permit old-age pensions carried 639,175 to 64,209 and state prohibition was repealed. Chandler had been elected to head the people's government.

Though surprisingly few people in Kentucky are aware of it, the state government has long been bi-partisan. Whether Democrats or Republicans have nominally been in control, the real power has been important interests behind the officeholders. The Louisville *Courier-Journal* and the Louisville *Times,* pro-New Deal newspapers owned by ex-Ambassador Bingham, have insistently pointed out that the actual government of Kentucky has been triangular—professional politicians of both parties in alliance with the utility and racing interests. According to Bingham's newspapers and other critics, utility interests especially have entrenched themselves in a position of great power for the purpose of gaining special privilege on matters of taxes, franchises, and government aid in maintaining high rates. The people of Kentucky knew Laffoon and Rhea represented these interests and that Swope did also. They "calculated" Chandler didn't.

"Happy" came into office with a firm grip on the Legislature and still maintains it. He has no excuses. His record:

For the people—repeal of the sales tax, ratification of the proposed child-labor amendment, lowered toll-bridge charges (a big item in river-bedeviled Kentucky), and a not yet operative law requiring an examination showing freedom from venereal disease before marriage.

Against the people—reduction of the state debt and balancing the budget at the expense

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of the people. Refusal to modernize the antiquated system of local government (120 counties where fifteen or twenty are needed) which imposes a staggering load of jobholders on the people. Refusal to curtail the power under which any community except Louisville can levy a $1.50 annual poll tax (while a dead letter in most sections, this still remains as a threat). Sending troops into Harlan County to "maintain order" in absolute contradiction to his promises to the miners. Refusal to remove Sheriff Theodore H. Middleton of Harlan County from office and dismissal of charges against this terroristic stooge of the coal operators already exposed by the La Follette committee and now on trial in the federal courts. Refusal to permit more than a $15 maximum for old-age pensions (about $9.40 is the maximum in practice). No blind pensions or aid for dependent children (both obtainable through cooperation with the national government). No unemployment insurance benefits until 1939.

Here's an excellent example of how Chandler, and federal funds, balanced the budget. The Kentucky Crippled Children's Association maintains a hospital at Louisville and provides poor crippled children with surgical attention. Their yearly appropriation from the state was $150,000. The federal government, to encourage such activities, decided to match all state money dollar for dollar. This would have meant $300,000 to relieve the crippled kids' sufferings. Said "Happy": "You've been getting along on $150,000, that's enough." Down went the state appropriation to $75,000.

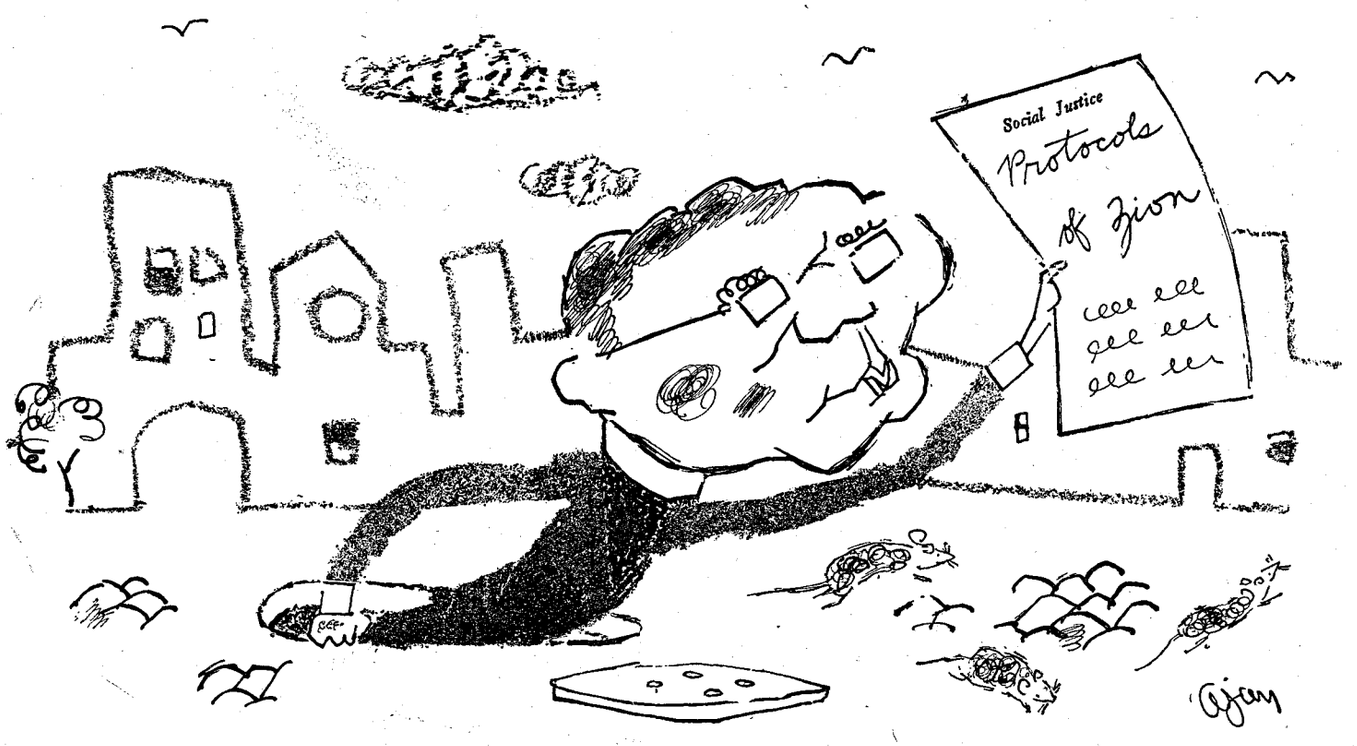
There is little direct relief given in Kentucky. "Sonny Boy," in balancing the budget and reducing the state debt, has seen to this. The counties are expected to provide for the indigent and since they either can't or won't the task is eventually handed back to the federal government. The President pointed this out in his speech at Covington when in telling Kentuckians their governor had come often to Washington and had never gone away empty-handed, he said:

"In these six years the federal government has allotted to Kentucky in new kinds of federal expenditures for relief, work relief, public works, the education of youth, farm rehabilitation, and crop benefits—approximately $280,000,000. In these six years the federal government has spent in more traditional forms of federal expenditure, such as matching funds for state highways on a fifty-fifty basis, aid to the state for the building of state institutions, flood control and river work, federal public buildings, and the maintenance of regular agricultural services—at least another $50,000,000."

Because of the small amount of direct relief, the work done by the WPA in Kentucky has been considerable. Senator Barkley has been able to secure for his state a goodly share of the money appropriated by Congress. Recently, in line with the administration's flood-control measures, allocations were made for flood walls at Louisville, Covington, and Paducah, all on the Ohio River. The Workers Alliance is growing in strength and is very active in the fight to reelect Barkley. The recent order boosting the wages of unskilled workers in the most sparsely populated districts of the state from $21 to $32 a month and from $35 to $45 in the Louisville district was due in no small part to their demands.

As a traveler heads southward in Kentucky, he sees astonishing contrasts between what is and what might be. About Lexington are vast stock farms of from one thousand to five thousand acres of rich land devoted to grazing. These are probably the most magnificent farms on earth. Here are horse stalls with silver-plated door knobs and immaculate hospital quarters equipped with costly apparatus for giving horses X-ray treatment. One cannot help thinking of the people in the state who lack medical care and of children who die of malnutrition for want of milk, while these vast farms produce almost no food for human consumption. A state which can afford such luxuries as these farms (one of which had winnings of $422,000 in a single year) surely should also be able to provide its people with all human necessities.

Alben W. Barkley was born Nov. 24, 1877, in a log cabin at Lowes, Graves County, the son of a poor tobacco farmer. He studied at Marvin College, Clinton, Ky., then went to Emory College, Atlanta, Ga., and the University of Virginia law school. He was admitted to the bar at Paducah in 1901. In 1905 he became prosecuting attorney for McCracken County (which includes Paducah) and in 1909 advanced to the county bench. In 1912 he was elected to the House of Representatives. He remained there until, after an unsuccessful campaign for the governorship in 1923, his people sent him to the Senate in 1926. Here, as in the House of Representatives, Barkley was a loyal "party man." In 1928 he proved his political courage in his convictions by stumping the South vigorously for his party's nominee, Al Smith. Most other Southern leaders went fishing. When the New Deal came Barkley became a loyal and devoted follower of Franklin D. Roosevelt. As a careful, stable, dependable speaker, his services were highly valued and he was entrusted with many important tasks. When the 1936 Democratic convention rolled around, it was Alben Barkley who was chosen to make the important "keynote" speech.



A. Ajay

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When he did the entire nation discovered an excellent orator.

Last summer Joe Robinson of Arkansas, Roosevelt's leader in the Senate, dropped dead. The copperheads saw an excellent chance to grasp power in the Senate by electing one of their number. They decided on Pat Harrison of Mississippi, one of Barney Baruch's puppets. Roosevelt chose Barkley, mustered all his strength behind him, and despite hidden wells of fifth-column strength Barkley emerged the victor in a 38-37 vote. As senatorial leader, Barkley remained a "party man." He led the fight for the Wages and Hours Act, directed the campaign for the anti-lynching bill, and pushed all Roosevelt's measures. Not once did he play Garner's game.

Chandler's term as governor expires in December 1939. A demagogue never lets himself get out of the public eye. Not a demagogue with Chandler's ambitions. Just about the only way he can provide himself with a forum for his speeches and antics is to get into the United States Senate. He's been aware of this for some time.

Last winter, when Justice Sutherland retired from the Supreme Court, "Happy's" Legislature passed a resolution calling on the President to appoint the state's junior Senator, Marvel M. Logan, to the vacancy. The scheme was well understood: if Logan had gone to the court, Chandler would have resigned as governor, then Lieutenant Governor Keen Johnson, succeeding to the governorship, would have appointed Chandler to complete the unexpired Senate term. But another Kentuckian, Stanley Reed, got the appointment. Next "Happy" approached the President with a proposition that Logan be given a lower federal court berth. Roosevelt refused and in a letter to Logan dated February 1 wrote: "I want you to know that the governor came to see me yesterday, repeated the same proposition, and seemed surprised when I told him that you and I would be the last people in the world to traffic in judicial appointments in order to satisfy the ambitions of one office-seeker."

Not to be stopped by mere Presidential rebuffs, Chandler next visited Barkley and revealed the real purpose of his maneuvering, and proposed a deal by which Barkley would nominate Chandler for President in 1940. When he had recovered from the audacity of the proposal, Barkley laughed.

Labor is squarely behind Barkley in his fight for renomination. John L. Lewis, in his capacity as chairman of Labor's Non-Partisan League, has praised Barkley and urged his support. William Green has described Barkley's record as "unusual and exceptional" and as meriting support. Labor, which has been slow on the uptake in Kentucky, is moving faster now. However, the state is still predominantly agrarian in sentiment. The United Mine Workers is Kentucky's strongest union. Mining is one of the state's principal occupations with the 1930 census showing 59,792 coal miners. The workers in Louisville (pop. 307,745) are beginning to organize. The Railroad Brotherhoods are strong in all Kentucky cities, such as Paducah, where the railroads are a major factor. The Steel Workers Organizing Committee has been active in organizing the workers in such towns as Ashland. Most union-made cigarettes come from the Brown and Williamson plant in Louisville. Kentucky has many small scattered factories which make clothing, shoes, etc., and these workers are seeing the benefits of unionization and joining the movement.

Reports indicate that the President's farm-aid program has won the farmers' support for Barkley, who as a onetime farm boy speaks their language. Another agricultural issue on which a battle is being fought is the tobacco quota system. The Tennessee Valley Authority is of great interest to many of the tenant farmers and sharecroppers and their interest has recently been intensified by the beginning of construction on TVA's Gilbertsville Dam near Paducah.

While Barkley was leading the fight for the anti-lynching bill in the Senate, Chandler opposed the measure. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has bitterly denounced him for this action. Tens of thousands of Negroes in Kentucky have votes and are solidly lining up behind Barkley to strengthen the fight for the bill.

Chandler has been reenforced by all the tory forces. There's a lot of out-of-state, anti-New Deal money behind him and there have been charges made that every state employee has been forced to contribute 2 percent of his annual salary to support Chandler's campaign. Thomas L. Stokes, Scripps-Howard reporter, did his bit recently when he wrote a series of articles purporting to show the WPA deep in state politics. The Kentucky *Post* (the Covington edition of the Cincinnati *Post*), a Scripps-Howard paper, is circulated widely in Northern Kentucky. Many Kentuckians of all political creeds, while admitting that a small percentage of the charges are probably true, are inclined to doubt the general findings of the articles. Republican Party workers in Kentucky, having no primary election to occupy their attention, are reported rendering aid and assistance to their onetime enemy, Chandler.

The support from the united labor forces, from the farmers, and from WPA workers taking Aubrey Williams' advice to vote for their friends, ought to be enough to reelect Barkley. The strong Louisville city machine, reportedly for the senator, should be of assistance. Nevertheless, Happy and his tory aides are fighting with all their strength. His recently enacted "purgation" law, reminiscent of Huey Long, empowering Chandler-dominated boards to strike any voter off the registration lists and then require him to appear and prove his right to the ballot, should aid him no little. His state machine, his control over the old-age pensions, and his million and one wild promises may make the results closer than the recent Gallup poll showing Barkley leading 64-36 would indicate.

★

BOMBS ON BARCELONA

When bombs on Barcelona burst,
I was a thousand miles away,
And yet my walls cracked wide apart
And fell on me in disarray.

It was not so much splintering
Of glass in my once-sheltered place
As ominous and crackling sounds
Of justice broken on my face.

My room can never be repaired,
Until there is atonement first
For those who died because I slept,
When bombs on Barcelona burst.

LOUIS GINSBERG.

★

PLANS AND PRETENSES

WHOEVER has studied the German plan of military operations against France and Russia which General Schlieffen elaborated before the war will remember that the plan was worked out in nice detail with all necessary provisions made to cover a total campaign of forty days. The Schlieffen plan was very much like a planned trip abroad such as an expert in a travel bureau might map out for the prospective tourist.

France mobilized quickly, Russia ponderously. Paris was closer than Moscow. It was therefore Schlieffen's idea that during the first six weeks, before Russia could muster its forces, the Germans would surround Paris and hem in the French army along the Swiss frontiers. France would then be forced to make peace and the greater part of the German forces could be rushed eastward and hurled against the Russians. Speed was the keynote, and the swiftness of these maneuvers would determine whether the French army could be destroyed or at any rate rendered useless. The plan, according to Schlieffen himself, would not work out if the operations in France lasted over six weeks or if the French army succeeded in eluding the German scissors movement.

The war in France lasted not only six but 220 weeks, thirty-seven times longer than Schlieffen had calculated. After this thirty-seven-fold extension of that time limit which had been scheduled for a German victory, at least one thing came true which Schlieffen had foretold: the defeat of Germany.

Schlieffen's neatly fitted plan of operations went wrong all along the line because it rested upon these assumptions: that the enemy would not fight back, and that the enemy was inferior in morale and strategy. These views may be traced to the fact that while Schlieffen had participated in the war of 1866, which actually was but a minor military ex-

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cursion, he did not take part in the war of 1870-71, a relatively brief war, too, but somewhat longer and more hard-fought than the other. But the World War put the quietus on all plans of operation bearing even the remotest resemblance to Schlieffen's timed schedule for over-the-border excursions. It proved that prophecy would not stand up after the first encounter with the enemy: the balance rests in the lap of undetermined factors.

Why, at this time, dig up time-worn military plans and the lessons of the last war which have already been discussed at length? Because an article just published in *Der Deutsche in Polen* (The German in Poland) brings these things to mind. The article is presumably the result of studies made by a German General Staff officer for which it would appear he has received the prize of the German War Academy. His subject is "How Czechoslovakia Can Be Conquered," and the writer proceeds precisely along the lines of Schlieffen before the World War. Before France can mobilize (a matter of fourteen days), Germany must destroy the military strength of Czechoslovakia by cutting off retreat into Slovakia (see Schlieffen's plan for surrounding the French army!) and must occupy Prague (see Schlieffen on the subject of occupying Paris!). Along the narrow, mountainous border of Slovakia, defense will then be organized to keep out the Russians, who in the meanwhile would have come lumbering down from the East. And after that all the German forces would be pitted against France.

The Schlieffen plan, conceived before 1914, planned the crushing of France in six weeks. The chief-of-staff of the German Eighteenth Army Corps in Salzburg evidently plans the extinction of Czechoslovakia in only fourteen days. He mimics Schlieffen to the extent where he says that should the campaign extend beyond the time scheduled, it will fall through. In other words, if Czechoslovakia is not brought to her knees in two weeks' time Germany may look forward to a most disagreeable, long-drawn-out struggle, the outcome of which cannot be foretold.

We would suggest that the non-military reader, who might be struck with the audacity of this latterday plan, allegedly the work of Colonel Conrad of the German General Staff, compare the schedule mapped out by Schlieffen with the actual facts as they unrolled on the battlefields of France. The comparison holds a lesson likewise for the putative proposals of Colonel Conrad. Every day which Schlieffen bargained for stretched into a month, figuring the duration of the war on the basis of operations against the country which was the objective of the initial drive. And the situation before us is in no wise different. A war against our country would last not a mere two weeks but more than a year It will no more end in the surrender of the Czechoslovakian army than the Word War ended in the surrender of the French army. And that is probably as much as the general reader wants to know.—

COL. STANISLAV YESTER.

Readers' Forum

Citizen-News Str ce

TO NEW MASSES: Milita been thrown around th wood *Citizen-News*. This is was once looked upon as the in the Southwest. The strike sands of sympathizers of workers have canceled thei paper. *Variety*, the local film at the *Citizen-News* plant, elsewhere. CIO and AF of their support to the strikers. committee, almost one hundr ready withdrawn their ad paper for the duration of the to do so are having their st At various times as many as sympathizers joined the pick dozen stores along Hollywoo workers, movie stars, writers, the studios, laborers, and e are helping to picket. Amo actively assisting the striker Melvyn Douglas, Frank C Konrad Bercovici, Gale Son der, John Ford, Jim Tully, Miriam Hopkins. Radio br public with the strikers' cau of the strikers, the Hollywooc appears regularly on the s are being held at the homes people to raise money for the ago two thousand formal i members of the film colon cocktail and picket-line par front of the newspaper offic

What is it all about? Wh owner of the liberal Hollyv volved in a strike? Why is a fighter of corruption in h ponent of national and inte pleaded for the release of T the courage to denounce t syndicalism law of Californ Palmer now receiving the su ler, of the reactionary Los the identical interests he onc

The answer is simple e veneer of liberalism, Palmer on the organization of his o ine unions. An innocuous co welcome with open arms, Newspaper Guild was a bir At the Hollywood *Citizen-N* the guild had been dragg months—because of Mr. Pa then, on May 14, when eve agreed upon and only Mr. necessary on the contract, th ers—all active guild membe moving-picture critic, Mell writer, and Roger C. Johnso to found the Los Angeles was its chairman in 1936, missed. Later on, two more felt the ax.

The management's excuse "the recession," but that ha Dr. Towne Nylander, of th National Labor Relations Bo induce publisher Palmer to re further negotiations. But Thereupon the local office of to Washington that Harlan ing the Wagner act. This for he had previously been

picket lines have plant of the Holly- daily paper which aladin of liberalism in full swing. Thou- striking editorial subscriptions to the ily, formerly printed now being printed unions are pledging cording to the strike advertisers have al- tisements from the rike. Those refusing promptly picketed. fteen hundred strike lines in front of a Boulevard. Maritime hnical workers from state assemblymen the movie notables re Dorothy Parker, a, Dudley Nichols, gaard, Lionel Stan- g Lardner, Jr., and dcasts acquaint the

The official organ *itizen-News Striker*, ets. Weekly parties well known movie ikers. Several weeks ations were sent to inviting them to a on the sidewalk in

Harlan G. Palmer, d *Citizen-News*, in- former progressive, office, a bitter op- tional reaction, who Mooney, who had nefarious criminal- —why is Harlan G. rt of Harry Chand- geles *Times*, and of ought?

gh. In spite of his er looked with favor workers into genu- any union he would t the Los Angeles a different feather. negotiations with on for nearly six r's insistence. And ing was apparently mer's signature was ace editorial work- —Elizabeth Yeaman, G. Scott, editorial eporter, who helped wspaper Guild and ere summarily dis- tive guildsmen also

the dismissals was convinced anyone. egional office of the , tried for hours to ate the five, pending mer flatly refused. NLRB complained Palmer was violat- his second offence, sed by the NLRB of

fostering a company union among his printers. Neither case, as yet, has been decided.

The Palmer-guild fight has given rise to many anomalous and amusing situations. For instance, the notorious "Red" squad, of the Los Angeles police, the declared foe of every progressive cause, is to be seen lurking near the picket lines, providing protection for the liberal publisher who formerly castigated the squad for all it was worth.

Harlan G. Palmer insists on his right to dismiss whom he pleases. He will not be dictated to either by his employees or by the government; it is a matter of "principle" with him. The strikers counter with the charge that the firing of the five guild members was an obvious attempt to intimidate employees, discourage union activity, and prevent the signing of a guild contract. They also remind Mr. Palmer that the American Newspaper Guild, to which they are affiliated, has never lost a strike. Frank Scully, the Hollywood wit, sums up the matter with a poetical observance:

Palmer's creed is "Love thy neighbor,"
Unless the guy's for union labor.

Hollywood, Calif. CONRAD SEILER.

Two Artists

IN OUR issue of July 12 we published an open letter to Thomas H. Benton by Joe Jones. Jones told Benton he was enlisting in the fight against the dismissal of Benton as instructor in the Kansas City Art Institute. Since Benton had himself been victimized by the reactionaries, Jones wrote, it was possible to hope he would adopt a progressive attitude. This correspondence ensued.—THE EDITORS.

DEAR JOE: Much obliged, old cock, for your open letter. The spirit of it is swell, only I'm not quite deserving. I'm not temperamentally serious enough to go in for righteous indignation. All this stuff from the "real-estate peddler" (thanks for the designation, I'll use it) to the antics of Dewey Short and the simplicities of Sirovich are just part of the whoopee of life to me. They are to laugh. The only thing I object to in your letter was your attitude toward the cultural status of Missouri. In my view, the state leads the world. Haven't they got a Benton mural on the walls of their state capitol?

Chilmark, Mass. TOM.

DEAR TOM: I am sorry you were unable to see my point of view about Missouri being a culturally reactionary state—when I made my point, you will remember there was a threat to remove your mural from the walls of Jefferson City by a gang of political idiots who thought it was a progressive statement.

You can imagine my confusion when I first heard of your dismissal as art instructor. I was so delighted to find your bedfellows castrating you in the way you so richly deserve that it was extremely difficult to see the real issue at hand—one that many artists with a "more sincere temperament" could find themselves in sympathy with and consider worth fighting for.

We laughed, too, because everyone likes to remember he told you so. And even now we like to believe the fight isn't over, because we know reactionaries are not licked only by threats of opposition—our fear is that we may hear of your future dismissal as a subtle thing that takes the form of your quitting your job because you are no longer the happy boisterous Kansas City brat which you like to think yourself.

St. Louis, Mo. JOE.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Who Is B. Traven?

IT IS four years since that mysterious American novelist who calls himself B. Traven allowed his first book to be published in his own country, in the language in which it was originally written. That was *The Death Ship*. It first appeared in Germany in 1926, in a version written by Traven in German. In 1934 a translation by Eric Sutton from this edition was published in England. The following year *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* came out simultaneously in London and New York; the former a translation from Traven's German, the latter as written originally by him in English. Add to these puzzlers the fact that all Traven's thirteen books were first published in German from the author's own manuscripts in that language (although written by him originally in English) and we understand why the libraries of the world have classified him as a German writer. Our own Library of Congress, with its customary zeal for full names, expanded B. into Bruno; whereupon, reproved by Traven, it contracted Bruno back to B. and so revised all of its printed cards!

Traven has been called variously an Englishman, a Russian, a Yugoslav, a Czechoslav, a German, and a Mexican. His agent in London even says that his real name is not Traven. In a recent letter to an American bookseller Traven settled the question of his nationality, if not his name. "May I just mention," he wrote, "that my first name is not Bruno, of course not; neither is it Ben, nor Benno. These names, like the many nationalities I have, among them the German, are inventions of critics who want to be smart and well informed. Several times I have protested in European publications that I am not even of German race or blood. The publishers of the German editions of my books knew from the first day of our relations that I am an American born in the USA. Why my books were published in Euorpe and not in this country first is another story."

The curious thing is that Traven's German and English styles are both a bit foreign. Speculating on evidence in his books, I hazard that he is a Wisconsin-born Scandinavian. But it really doesn't matter; his books are all we need to have of him, and all that he wants to give us. Like Jack London and Upton Sinclair he is a true international proletarian writer; that he is an American is incidental. His books have been published in fourteen languages.

Like its predecessors, Traven's latest book to be published in this country (*The Bridge in the Jungle,* Alfred A. Knopf, $2.50), has a blurbless jacket. His publisher is still enjoined from advertising his books, except in certain liberal periodicals, and is sworn to secrecy as far as any personal publicity is concerned. Other American writers, notably Jeffers and Steinbeck, have sought to avoid personal publicity, but I believe Traven is unique in the way he lays down the conditions under which his books are published and binds his publisher to absolute silence. When his Swiss publisher requested a photograph for publicity purposes, Traven promptly responded—with a group picture of several hundred men, explaining that he was among them!

It appears that Traven is a plain, simple man who thinks himself no more important than the plain, simple men who set, print, bind, pack, and ship his books. These men he holds to be quite as necessary as he in the production of a book. He feels that he has enlisted and is living in a new sort of association that embraces the world, in which a man who creates something great creates not for himself or for his personal interests or notoriety, but with the object of serving mankind to the utmost of his strength and ability. This service to mankind is the duty of every man, and as Traven considers writing to be his duty, he recoils from lionizing and flattery. He does not look upon himself as an artist or writer, but as a worker. His American publisher sends him no clippings about his books.

Traven has, of course, been banned by the Nazis. Since 1933, his sole German outlet has been his Swiss publisher, the Büchergilde Gutenberg, in Zürich. In spite of the contempt expressed in his work for what he regards as bureaucratic bolshevism, his books are being published by the Soviets in huge editions. In the USSR *The Death Ship* has sold two million copies; in the USA 2,500.

Of all Traven's books *The Death Ship* is the only one which is not about Mexico. That "Moby Dick of the stokehold" is a masterpiece of which I believe Americans will be increasingly proud. When the movies tried to buy the rights to it, Traven's reply was characteristic—"I write to propagate ideas, not for reasons of profit." And in the book itself is a passage which tells what he thinks of the movies and sea-writers, including Conrad, O'Neill, and McFee:

> All the romance of the sea that you still find in magazine stories died long, long ago. You would look in vain for it even in the China Sea and south of it. I don't believe it ever existed save in sea stories—never on the high seas or in sea-going ships. There are many fine youngsters who fell for those stories and believed them true, and off they went to a life that destroyed their bodies and their souls. Because everything was so very different from what they had read in those alluring stories. Life on the sea is not like they make it out to be and it never was. There is a chance, one in a hundred, maybe, that at some time romance and adventure did exist for skippers, for mates, for engineers. You still may see them singing in operas and making beebaboo in the movies. You may find them also in best-sellers and in old ballads. Anyway, the fact is that the song of the real and genuine hero of the sea has never yet been sung. Why? Because the true song would be too cruel and too strange for the people who like ballads. Opera audiences, moviegoers, and magazine readers are like that. They want to have everything pleasant, with a happy ending. The true story of the sea is anything but pleasant or romantic in the accepted sense. The life of the real heroes has always been cruel, made up of hard work, of treatment worse than the animals of the cargo get, and often of the most noble sacrifices, but without medals and plaques, and without mention in stories, operas, and movies. Even the hairy apes are opera singers looking for a piece of lingerie.

The rest of Traven's books form an epic of Mexico's common people. All phases of the industrial and agricultural life are treated in turn, always from the proletarian viewpoint. These books, all published since 1926, include *The Cotton Pickers, The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (gold prospecting), *Land of Springtime* (a general study of Mexico, particularly the state of Chiapas), *The Bush, The Bridge in the Jungle, The White Rose* (petroleum), *The Carreta* (transportation), *Government* (a satire on the effects of bureaucracy on the Indians), *The March into the Mahogany Jungle* and *The Troza* (both on the lumber industry), and his latest book, *The Rebellion of the Hanged.* All but one are novels. Only four of them are available in English, and only two—*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* and *The Bridge in the Jungle*—in Traven's own English version.

Most of our recent books on Mexico have been written by traveling novelists and so-

Sid Gotcliffe

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ciologists such as D. H. Lawrence, Thames Williamson, Stuart Chase, Carleton Beals, Joseph Henry Jackson, and Max Miller. These men have gone to Mexico, as writers, expressly to gather material for their books. Traven is a different sort of writer. For the past dozen years he has lived the life of a Mexican worker. "I can't shake anything out of my sleeve," he says. "Others can do it, perhaps, but not I. I have to know the humans I tell about. They must have been my friends or companions or adversaries or my neighbors or my fellow citizens, if I am to describe them. I must have seen the things, landscapes and persons, myself, before I can bring them to life in my works. So I must travel. In jungles and primal forests, to Indian villages, distant ranchos, and to unknown, mysterious secret lakes and streams. It is necessary for me to have been afraid almost to madness before I can describe terror; I must myself suffer all sadness and heartache before I can visit suffering on the figures which I have called into life."

Like Upton Sinclair, Traven has been called a better sociologist than novelist. This criticism is perhaps true of some of his books, but it does not fit *The Bridge in the Jungle*. Here is a laconic work of art which focuses on a single tragic incident in the life of an Indian village, remote in the Southern Mexican jungle. There are relatively few of Traven's customary salty soliloquies on the stupidities of capitalism and bureaucracy. An Indian boy falls off a bridge at an evening fiesta; his body is hunted in vain until the old man of the village floats a candle on a little raft, which is drawn mysteriously to a point directly over the drowned corpse. Then follows a minute account of the funeral ceremony, told with mingled irony, pity, realism, and humor. The climax is the march through the jungle to the wretched cemetery, the little corpse already stinking, the mourners guzzling, stumbling, and howling, pigs and buzzards following, to where the drunken schoolmaster in attempting a eulogy topples into the open grave. This is a great scene, worthy of Rabelais, Cervantes, Breughel, or Hogarth.

Throughout the book Traven's gentle love of the Indians and their ways is contrasted with his disgust at the evidences of encroaching American civilization with its Hooveresque philosophy of materialistic gadgetism. As Herbert Klein has pointed out, all of Traven's Mexican novels are a sympathetic, almost sentimental, symphony on the theme: "The capitalist class, wherever it has come into power, has destroyed all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relationships" *(The Communist Manifesto)*. Equally detestable to Traven is the record of the Catholic Church in Mexico; he writes:

> When I had first come here, I had seen in these people the simple Indian peasants with ordinary courtesy such as one might find all over Spanish America in places where American tourists had never come to ruin the landscapes and try to make natives understand how glorious civilization is and tell them ten times a day how dirty and filthy they are and how badly organized their country is. It seemed that an occasion such as the one I had witnessed was necessary if one wanted to see those people as they really were, to see not only their dirt and their rags, but, what was more, their hearts and souls, the only things in man which count. Radios, Fords, and speed records do not count at all; they are but garbage when it comes to the final balance sheet. . . . It is religion that makes men love their neighbors and that dries the tears of a mother who has lost her baby and that makes you who have two shirts give one to the poor who has nothing with which to cover his nakedness. Is it religion? Death is usually an occasion for lip religion to show off in all its splendor. And here, where death marched silently into a gay party all set for a merry weekend of dancing, I could not see a glimpse of the white man's great religion. I had heard no prayers so far. Nobody had fingered a rosary. The singing of hymns by the communist agrarista was only very superficially connected with the Catholic religion because his singing had the eternal worldly meaning of good will to all men, and the Holy Virgin was called upon merely to inform her of what was happening, not to come down and help a poor Indian mother out of her sorrows. And it was because religion as we understand it had not entered either the hearts or the inner minds of these people that they could preserve hearts and souls overflowing with kindness and love.

Ruben Perez

In his love for the common people, his insistence on their essential dignity and goodness and his desire to lighten their burdens, and in his rejection of the bourgeois standards of a civilization built on material comforts, exploitation, and mass murder, B. Traven is in the great Whitman-Thoreau tradition. He is a natural storyteller who embroiders his tales with philosophy. He writes—or rather, as a German critic observed, he *talks*—novels that show what a strong and truly romantic proletarian literature can be, by being it.

It is to be hoped that he will permit his American publisher to issue the rest of his books about Mexico without too much delay. Our neighboring people have never had a more sympathetic and compelling spokesman. "I consider the Mexican-Indian," Traven writes, "and the members of the Mexican proletariat, which is 95 percent Indian, as my heart's brother, a brother who is nearer to me than any brother of the body. For I know with what courage, with what resignation, with what self-sacrifice—a self-sacrifice unknown and unheard of in Europe and the United States—the proletarian Indian in Mexico is striving to win his freedom and emerge into the light of the sun." It is Traven's love of justice and sympathy toward the burdened and ragged that have made him a great revolutionary writer. Here in his own words is his writer's credo:

> Every man has the duty to serve mankind with his best strength and ability, to lighten the burdens of life for other men, to bring them joy, and to direct their thoughts toward great ends. I fulfill my duty toward mankind as I have always done, whether as worker, seaman, explorer, private tutor in out of the way farms, and now as writer. I do not feel myself to be a person who wants to stand in the limelight. I feel myself a worker among mankind, nameless and fameless, like every worker who does his part to bring mankind a step forward.

This credo and the way in which his writing exemplifies it very nearly places Traven in a category by himself among his contemporaries. The best thing we can do to honor him is to read his books. Certainly a good example has been set us by European readers.

In the summer of 1936 I spent an afternoon with Lincoln Steffens, just three days before he died. We talked long of Traven. "That man," Steffie said, remembering his own experiences south of the Rio Grande, "is expressing the very heart and soul of Mexico. I am too tired to write to him, but if you can send him a message, tell him that I 'get' what he's doing and that I am very grateful."

LAWRENCE CLARK POWELL.

With the Eighth Route Army

CHINA FIGHTS BACK, *by Agnes Smedley. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.*

A TRIP personally conducted with the famous Eighth Route Army through the countryside of China is offered in *China Fights Back*. It is China in simple, understandable terms, in intimate experiences and shattering emotions.

There is no attempt to give the international background of the epoch-making struggle or even the previous history of China, the Japanese penetration through Manchuria to Peiping, the Shanghai war. Nor do you realize very much of what is happening in Hankow or on the other far-flung battle-fronts, as the Chinese government and army slowly consolidate their resistance. It is an intensive, not an extensive view of the war that Miss Smedley offers. It tells how this war feels to people who are fighting it on one of the most strategic fronts.

It tells the war in terms not of unpro-

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nounceable Chinese names requiring constant reference to new maps, as do most of the newspaper stories, but in terms of human beings whom you learn to love and admire: poverty-stricken farmers, soldier boys who have made the Long March, leaders like Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung. It makes this war real in terms of human hope and emotion.

The picture begins in the ex-Soviet district in Northern Shensi, where largely illiterate peasants live in caves cut in vertical cliffs, and eat two meals daily of millet flavored with turnips or some similar rough vegetable. Most of them have never heard of Japan or the Japanese. To such an audience Mao Tse-tung, Communist Party leader, explains the meaning of the incident at Lukouchiao and wins recruits for the army.

Then you go southward, bound for Sian and eventually the Shansi Front. The rains come, and you learn, for the first time, what rain means in the loess districts. Whole cliff-sides slip into valleys, cave-dwellings collapse, hill roads are impassable for vehicles and dangerous even for foot travelers. Reading these passages, you understand the difficulties of Japan's mechanized army in the season of rain.

You arrive in Sian with eager, ignorant soldier-boys seeing their first big city. Striding roughshod over the polished floor of a new hotel, turning on and off the electric lights and the bathroom taps in innocent marvel at these new contrivances, seeing a locomotive for the first time; they are the boys of the back country come to save China.

Then you see them save it. You watch the careful patience of their approach to the suspicious villagers of Shansi, whose women, children, and livestock have fled to the hills. You see peasants won by the first fair treatment they have known from military forces, and aroused by dramatic presentation of the atrocities of the Japanese. You stand with Chu Teh on a high ridge watching the Japanese come up the valley, tracing their path at night by the fires of burning villages.

It is an intimate story of personal experiences. Traveling in frequent pain from an injured spine, constantly hungry, carrying her typewriter strapped to her back on all-day marches, and writing her story late at night with freezing fingers in unheated huts, this American woman finds her days with the Eighth Route Army the "happiest of her life." It is not she alone who has felt this. Life with the Eighth Route Army, despite its hardships and dangers, is really happy. Mrs. Chou En-lai, who started on the famous Long March sick in bed with tuberculosis and was carried in a litter the first four months, after which she arose and walked, told me last winter in Hankow it was happiness that cured her. "What made you so happy?" I asked her. "Because we were all together and knew we had chosen the right way and so we could conquer all difficulties."

China Fights Back conveys not only the primitive life of the Chinese rural districts, the hardships and incredible devotion of the soldiers; it also makes convincing this feeling of happiness which comes to people who fight wholeheartedly and hopefully in the van of human progress, for their own liberty and that of the world.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG.

The Constructive Element

NEW WRITING, SPRING, 1938, *edited by John Lehmann. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.75.*

IN A sense John Lehmann's semi-annual *New Writing* is a compendium of revolutionary experience the world over. Pick up any volume and you will find yourself a partner in the triumphs and losses, the hopes and fears of workers and their allies in as many countries as are represented. The present volume, for example, will take you into a Chinese bakery where you will join the workers in the mischief they indulge in to lighten a backbreaking, heartbreaking day, and it will also take you into the ranks of the Chinese Red Army fighting around Shanghai in 1932; reading Mikhail Zoschenko's "The Housing Crisis," you will sense the humor with which the Soviets have learned to take some of the uncomfortable situations encountered in the building of Socialism; you will flee from Asturias to France with two Spanish militiamen, and, with them, you will be eager to return to the front; you will join Nicaraguan peasants with General Sandino's forces in the days when the United States Marines were hounding Sandino through his native jungles; you will work in the welding bay in a British shipyard; and you will sense the visitations of misery that a "labor-saving" device can bring workers under capitalism. I do not refer to these things in order to tell readers that a single issue of this periodical is like a round-the-world flight with Howard Hughes, but rather to indicate the diversity of experience and multiplicity of dimension in a literature with oneness of purpose. There is still talk of literary "monolithism" and *New Writing* is a compact and effective answer to a great deal of it.

Christopher Isherwood's long story, "The Landauers," is the most completely realized piece of writing in the current issue. It is a story of a highly cultured, prosperous, German-Jewish family on the eve of the curse. Isherwood was in Berlin in the days before Hitler came to power, and he writes convincingly of the period. In this story he tells us, in the first person, of his relations with Natalia Landauer and her cousin Bernhard. Attracted to the Landauers because he could not stand the developing anti-Semitism of the people with whom he was staying, Isherwood, as narrator, falls in love with Natalia; through her he meets Bernhard, who has charge of the department store the Landauers own, and the body of the long story deals with the temperamental conflicts between the

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Communist English writer and the sensitive, effete, young Jewish capitalist who, aware of the rising political tension and of his own anomalous status, is forced to hide behind a shrill and superficial fatalism. The story is short on action, but the dialogue is highly charged. Isherwood writes a polished, leisurely prose that is sometimes reminiscent of Oscar Wilde, as, indeed, his Bernhard Landauer may remind one of Dorian Gray, but it is a prose peculiarly apt for this sort of anti-climax:

> "There's a lot of heart failure," said the fat man, "in Germany these days."
>
> The Austrian nodded: "You can't believe all you hear. That's a fact."
>
> "If you ask me," said the fat man, "anyone's heart's liable to fail if it gets a bullet inside it."

Isherwood's prose is slow and measured, but the prose of his countryman, John Sommerfield, marches with all the vigor and determination of the loyalist armies he once served and now writes about. It is blunt and objective, so much so that, for the most part, "The Escape" reads more like a newspaper dispatch than a short story. And another Englishman, Peter Thompson, has contributed a fine story of the nervous lives of clerks and salesmen and filers in a large metropolitan store. It treats sympathetically the frustrations and neuroses of this lower middle-class group that bourgeois writers have generally handled with misunderstanding and contempt. There is a section called "Making," composed of five sketches of people on the job, intended as much to widen the reader's knowledge of the mechanics of industrial society as to deepen his understanding of its complex social relationships. Paul Nizan, who will be remembered by NEW MASSES readers for his news dispatches from France, has rewritten the legend of Theseus and Ariadne and the slaying of the Minotaur, and André Chamson has several more *Tabusse* anecdotes.

C. Day Lewis' "Addresses to Death" and R. B. Fuller's "Poem—for M.S., killed in Spain," stand out in what seems to me a rather weak group of poems. Fuller's detailed imagery and careful meter is particularly fine and he manages to express the whole spirit of this enterprise:

> We excavate our stories, give a twist
> To former endings in deliberate meter
> Whose subtle beat our fathers could not count
> Having their agile thumbs too far from fingers.

RICHARD H. ROVERE.

Soriano

From the Baltic to the Aegean

THE GERMAN OCTOPUS, *by Henry C. Wolfe. Doubleday, Doran & Co.*

THERE are four bad pages in Mr. Wolfe's supremely opportune and competent book. They are overbearing, unconvincing, and unnecessary; since Mr. Wolfe did not write them, they are doubly gratuitous. These pages are John Chamberlain's misleading and mischievous foreword to an otherwise indispensable survey of the nations which lie between Germany and the Soviet Union from the Baltic to the Black Sea. My only reason for starting with them is that the book is made to appear an argument for isolationism, which it is not. Like the reader, this review will get into Mr. Wolfe's book through Mr. Chamberlain's foreword.

Mr. Chamberlain does well by reproaching Americans for "indulging the luxury of moralistic simplism when passing on the troubles of other nations." Having demonstrated his awareness, he proceeds to indulge some moralistic simplism of his own. "Machiavelli," he writes, "could have told the French and the British that the time to nip Hitler was in 1936 in the Rhineland. Today it is too late. And the question which Americans might very well ponder, after reading Mr. Wolfe's excellent book, is: Do we want to be involved in the general ruin that is surely coming to Europe when the inevitable war breaks out?"

Before pondering Mr. Chamberlain's question, the reader might more profitably, with the help of Mr. Wolfe, ponder some others.

The first is: What will be the consequences of failure to "nip" Hitler? Mr. Wolfe gives no explicit answer to this or other controversial points, but his material is magnificently eloquent. It leads irresistibly to the conclusion that every nation in Central and Southeastern Europe is confronted with the life-and-death problem of German annexation or domination.

Hungary, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia are marked for some form of *Anschluss*. Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Poland are designated for Nazi economic and political *Gleichschaltung*. The fate of these six powers will probably settle that of the smaller ones, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia, Greece. Austria was still an independent power when Mr. Wolfe finished his book. Today Czechoslovakia is approximately in the same position as the Austria of July 1934, when Dollfuss was assassinated

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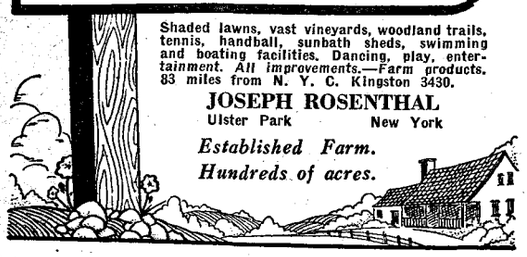

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and Mussolini rushed his crack motorized troops to the Brenner Pass. Hitler retreated once this year, but only the better to advance at the first opportune moment. If Czechoslovakia holds fast, it may signal the crack of doom for the Third Reich. If it falls, the others may eventually go with it.

The fact cannot be blinked that the Hitler Reich is no longer the nation which remilitarized the Rhineland. The *Diktat* of Versailles is a thing of the past. The annexation of Austria started Germany on its second stage to world power: the conquest of Europe from the Baltic to the Aegean. A Reich which owned or controlled Rumania's oil, Czechoslovakia's splendid heavy industry, Hungary's cattle, Bulgaria's farm produce, and Poland's grains would be able to contest for the whole world. Of course, it is altogether unlikely that Germany will ever dominate all this without a major war. But that is what Hitler would like to do.

Mr. Chamberlain thinks that "today it is too late." Is it really too late? Or rather, since Mr. Chamberlain pretends that his conclusion is drawn from Mr. Wolfe's book, what is Mr. Wolfe's evidence?

I gather from every chapter that no nation in Central and Southeastern Europe is pleased with the prospect. Some of them have been playing Hitler's game but none intends to be a second Austria if it can be helped. The fact is that Germany's drive is incompatible with the national aspirations of all and the national existence of a few. In this respect, Mr. Wolfe does justice to the complexity of the factors involved. He recognizes that every nation in Central Europe except Czechoslovakia has come under Germany's economic domination, that each coordinates its policies with Hitler's wherever possible. But he is also alert to the struggles they have waged in the past for just that national existence which Hitler now threatens. This saves him from the easy fatalism of the Chamberlain foreword.

This brings us to Mr. Chamberlain's question. Since it has nothing at all to do with Mr. Wolfe's book but is an expression of Mr. Chamberlain's isolationist politics, I should like to counter with another. If, as he says, another European war is inevitable, what in our past experience encourages us to indulge in the moralistic simplism of a double standard whereby we expect to stay out of a "general ruin" only sixteen and a half hours away? I submit, the answer is: nothing. And is *this* not the proper question? Mr. Chamberlain asks one which stacks the cards in his favor. Of course we want to stay out of Europe's ruin! I will go further and say that we want Europe to stay out of ruin also. But why should one who considers Europe's ruin inevitable be so optimistic with respect to ourselves? A fatalist needs to be consistent or nothing. For my part, the rejection of fatalism is the beginning of wisdom in these matters. Europe need not be lost to "general ruin" but if it is so are we.

In one respect, I agree with Mr. Chamberlain. *The German Octopus* is required reading. Mr. Wolfe knows Central and Southeastern Europe with a human intimacy as well as a political understanding. He does far more than simply describe Nazi penetration. He succeeds in placing each nation in the proper historical setting, economic position, and political balance. He does not make the mistake of viewing the Nazi drive to the east too narrowly. It is a step in the domination of the world, or at least, in the bid for such domination.

There is one slip in the book which psychiatrists might examine. Chapter II is entitled "Hitler Adopts Pan-Germanism." But in all the chapter-heads at the tops of the pages, this is made to read: "Hitler Adopts Pan-Americanism." Now what could the linotyper possibly have meant by that?

THEODORE DRAPER.

The Pigtail Rebellion

MY SISTER EILEEN, *by Ruth McKenney. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $2.*

THE tradition of the familiar essay has had to wait for Ruth McKenney's book, *My Sister Eileen,* to become screamingly familiar. The adventures of Ruth and her pretty sister, growing up in Cleveland in the twenties and migrating to Greenwich Village in the thirties, have stood out, from time to time, on the fashionably pallid pages of *New Yorker* prose like the handprint of a grimy urchin.

The public can bless the fevered imagination of the McKenney girls for the behavior that so often derailed the orderly train of events and left us all laughing in the wreckage. They were young rips. To the niceynice situations ordained by the stuffy mores of the suburbs, the McKenneys reacted with primitive cunning. Like the heathen of legend who bolted and ran at the sight of a locomotive bearing down on them from the screen, the girls and their third-grade chums scrammed during the same scene in Chapter One of the *Death-Defying Desmond* serial in 1918.

Our heroines went on to meet Culture, administered by the six aunts on the Farrell side, and Culture took a famous beating. Camp Hi-Wah; the Red Cross life-saving test; Noel Coward; *Chickie,* who had her baby in the forbidden pages of the press; a compromising classroom correspondence with a prurient French lad; adventures in a print shop; father's experimental washing machines; a Georgian prince studying dairy science at Ohio State; and an interview with Mr. Randolph Churchill, Breath of Empire, serve to itemize the delirium of adolescence.

At the threshold of womanhood, the world gets a little out of control. The terroristic inventiveness that disposed of childhood's dilemmas fails our heroine when she is taken in Poland as an international spy; and Mr. Spitzer, the first landlord in the Village, works a clean-cut triumph with his remark-

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able green fungus. The sinister forays of the Brazilian navy nearly smirch the honor of the McKenneys, and it takes a rather trite ruse to escape from the future admirals. But safe they are, behind barred doors with drawn eggbeaters, as the work draws to a close.

My Sister Eileen, I hope you will note, is a very funny book. Before you pick it up in the evening, think of a really good gag to tell the boss when you arrive late in the morning. Miss McKenney does not belong with the memoirists of childhood who serve the first course of life under a dressing of molasses. She was no Heidi and the two of them weren't exactly Bobbsey Twins. By no exercise of the imagination can I see Shirley Temple in the film version, reading aloud, in the print-shop scene, galley proofs of the scurrilous remarks of the delegates to the 1927 convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.

No, not in character for Miss Temple. But delightfully, uproariously in character for those who have survived, as cheerfully, the triumphs and ignominies of adolescence.

JAMES DUGAN.

Shelley's First Critic

MARY SHELLEY, A BIOGRAPHY, *by R. Glynn Grylls, Oxford University Press. $7.*

IT IS significant that those modern critics, led by Prof. Ellsworth Barnard, who are attempting to turn Shelley into a Christian mystic are quite vigorous in their denunciation of his wife Mary. The reason for this is simple. Shelley was essentially a revolutionary poet, and Mary recognized him as such. The canonization (not to speak of emasculation) of Shelley, therefore, hits a snag in the expressed critical judgment of Mary, and while it is possible by a series of ingenious misrepresentations to deck Shelley up as a mystic, it is not possible to do so with Mary. Mary, therefore, becomes a plain fool.

But Mary was far from being a fool, as far in fact as Shelley was from being a Christian mystic. She was the first critic to perceive that Shelley's main message was a political one, as her prefaces to Shelley's works show, and the fact that her opinion has since been snowed under by more than a century of idealistic blurbs (from Hazlitt to Arnold to Santayana) does not at all prove that she was wrong. Anyone who wishes to understand Shelley, in fact, must circumvent this metaphysical shrine and get back to the approach first indicated by Mary in 1824.

Of this Mary, the Mary who shared and understood the revolutionary philosophy of Shelley, we see little in the present biography. It is aimed principally at giving a picture of Mary's private life, and derives its main interest from its account of that life in the long years following her husband's death, when Mary, threatened with poverty by the Shelleys if she attempted a biography of her

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husband, and deserted by many of her former friends, set to work to devote herself to the upbringing of her son, Percy Florence Shelley (who developed into an amiable baronet with an interest in the drama).

In these latter years Mary, as this biography reveals, fell away from the progressive stand of Shelley. She broke with his radical friends. "Since I lost Shelley I have no wish to ally myself with the Radicals—they are full of repulsion to me. . . ." (p. 207). And she witnessed the coronation of William IV with considerable pleasure. Later she conceived a certain admiration for the tory Duke of Wellington.

Regrettable as this lapse may be, it is interesting to note that as late as 1839 (eight years after the above remarks on the Radicals) she gave her most vigorous interpretation of Shelley as a revolutionary poet, showing that no matter what her opinions of the Radicals, she never lost her insight into the political message of her husband.

There is still need for a study of Mary Shelley by one acquainted with the political background of the first half of the last century, for this book, while sympathetic and a welcome relief after recent pettily hostile attacks, fails to give a study of this kind. Such a work would undoubtedly also lead to a further clarification of Shelley's political philosophy.

K. N. CAMERON.

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day night—a time to let go, no work on Sunday to get up for, a little pleasure, a few extra drinks, nipping in and out of bars, meeting relatives, friends, old workmates. You sit with the discarded pieces of human junk in the waiting room who are to undergo the Means Test. You drop into the library reading-room, known as "the tomb" by the unemployed who sleep away the time there. You go with a worker on a tour of the small industrial town he's lived in most of his life, and you know why people rot in these husks littered all over England.

Because there is so much wrong with the conditions of labor and living, the workers are forced to take an interest in trade unionism and politics. They tell you what they learned from the first General Strike in 1926, from the cowardliness of some of their leaders, from the crookedness of politicians, from the squabbling of minority parties. The final words of one sum up for all:

> Though many of us are fed up to the teeth with past failures, we know inside of us that the problems of today will have to be faced. Poverty, fascism, and war will have to be challenged. Three square meals per day, steady work, leisure time, a chance for the kids, and no one taking from the communal basket unless he has contributed what he is reasonably able to do, are things we can agree upon. We want the earth to be plowed, and the corn to grow, and things to be built. We want laughter and contentment, instead of misery and apprehension. We know that these things are life, and worth struggling for, and that we are at the crossroads.

They, too, want to see fulfilled a program for jobs, security, democracy, and peace. And like us, they realize what they need to gain these ends is the popular front which has done so much for Spain and France.

Although only two of those who contributed their stories to this collection have had books published before, the writing throughout is good. It is simple, clear, direct. The facts are accurate, the response to them true, and the point made with no hesitancy or fuss. It is a kind of writing that is meant not only for readers removed from their kind of world, to let them see how others live, but for workers themselves, to give sharp form and meaning to the body of their experiences, and to make articulate their needs and hopes.

MILTON MELTZER.

Take It Away

BRASS TACKS, *by A. G. Keller. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.*

A BETTER defense of what the author calls conservatism might have been written, but not a more unpleasant one. Professor Keller has got his dander up. He believes that there is no progress without initiative and that human nature is such that initiative is called forth only by the desire for private property. By an appeal to anthropological tidbits he shows that even the primitives had private property as a bait to initiative. But the New Deal is full of magic, talk of "abundance" and "experimentation." It is aiming at the destruction of private property. It has "doubtful engineering projects" (TVA?), it is run by "the modern magician . . . [with his] old confident and confidential smile" (not F.D.R.?). And if we communalize property (as the New Deal is supposed to be doing) "pretty soon the rigid 'logic' of the social theorist will demand the socialization of women and the communalization of children"—and then—"presently you find religion, always conservative, in your path and have to create anti-God societies."

Can this really be the work of the student and associate of the great Sumner? Apparently the academic life has sheltered Professor Keller from the realities of the past nine years. To begin with, the New Deal is hardly communistic or communalistic. I have not heard of a single instance of the expropriation of private property. The "doubtful engineering projects" have been "doubted" only because of their effectiveness. To call the social system "allegedly ailing" is a confession of more than ignorance. To prate of "human nature" as being opposed to the New Deal, if it needs an answer, is disposed of by H. G. Wells' statement that: "Socialism is against human nature. That is true and it is equally true of everything else; capitalism is against human nature, competition is against human nature, cruelty, kindness, religion, and doubt, monogamy, polygamy, celibacy, decency, indecency, piety, and sin are all against human nature. Human nature is against human nature."

One cannot respect the thoughts of a mature man who hurls such pebbles as "boondoggling," "soap-boxers in need of a shave," "Have-nots." Or this: "It is the alert, self-reliant individual who becomes mortally aweary of the caging good-for-nothing or the hulking indolent." That is all this student of society can say about the eleven million unemployed, described by Cardozo in the Social Security cases as "men . . . thrown out of work because there is no longer any work to do, or because the disability of age makes them incapable of doing it," adding, "Rescue becomes necessary irrespective of the cause."

Professor Keller is not an economist. He says, "If everyone could get his mind clear on the difference between nominal (money) wages and real (what money will buy) wages, the economic millennium would be many decades nearer." He is not a statesman, for his remedy for international peace is "the removal of barriers to trade." He is not even an honest conservative, for he mentions that Mussolini, at least, gave "the certainties of a firm government." But a book like this, because of its sharp name-calling and its anthropological pretensions, might have a popular appeal. It should be publicized as a rehash of the New York *Sun* headlines with the hysteria of the recent *American Mercury* articles. Take it away.

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Alas, Ethel's vacation was sunk before it began, in spite of elaborate preparations. She mastered the crawl, and bodybuilt her torso to bathing-suit proportions at Goodwin's Gym *(adv.)*. She got a personality haircut and by adding a few dirndls to last year's overalls worked up a pretty snappy wardrobe of play clothes.

The one thing she forgot to prepare was her mind. Last winter she took a Trial Subscription to NEW MASSES from a friend who was a WYFIP*. In May when the subscription expired, she meant to renew it, but the reminders got buried under a pile of summer resort folders. Before Ethel realized what had happened, there was a six-week blank in her pre-vacation mind.

She missed those exclusive dispatches on what's really happening in Europe. She missed Richard Wright's *Bright and Morning Star* that everybody's been raving about. She can't even join in the discussion of A. B. Magil's Appraisal of the New Deal now going on.

But why go on? You know all she has missed, if you've been reading NEW MASSES the past few weeks. It's too late to save Ethel's vacation. But you *can* save your own—by renewing your subscription to NEW MASSES NOW before you forget it and before there comes any gap in your own vacation conversation.

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MOVIES

IN DEFENSE of *Blockade* have come the critics, progressive organizations, and trade unions, motivated by that lively intelligence headquarters, Associated Film Audiences, and Hollywood itself is rising in the cause of the freedom of the movies to produce pictures with popular front-page themes. While the oracle of the film department of the *New Republic,* Mr. Otis Ferguson, advises Hollywood not to touch subjects like the war in Spain, and Mr. Gilbert Seldes, of *Scribner's,* sees those dangerous documentaries under his bed at night, the people who make the films and the people who go to them have been excited enough by *Blockade* to attempt to put the movies under the Bill of Rights too.

Hollywood's mobilization, held two weeks ago as a Conference on the Freedom of the Screen, was a gathering of film folk to announce their rights. They heard Walter Wanger, producer of *Blockade,* John E. Abbott, curator of the film library of the Museum of Modern Art, and John Ford, director of *The Informer* and other significant pictures.

Mr. Wanger hailed the gathering as "an important step in audience-producer relationship" in the counterfight against the "vile and unfair" attacks by "minority groups, individuals, rags, and nations" on "a very important pillar of the democratic structure we are so proud to live under."

Mr. Wanger landed a nice left hook on Harry Brandt, the operator of a chain of movie houses in New York, who recently advertised in a film trade-organ that the trouble with Hollywood was that the stars made too much money. Said Mr. Wanger, "It is the responsibility of all divisions of the motion picture industry to produce, distribute, and exhibit in tune with the times, and the showmen who own theaters and do not exhibit and assist to the best of their ability new attractions and new talents have no right to take advertising space to complain about the cost of the only stars they themselves want in their pictures. They are incompetent and fakers."

"It is not *Blockade* reactionaries are fighting against but against the fact that, if *Blockade* is a success, a flood of stronger and stronger films will appear and the films will not only talk but say something. The plan is to frighten the distributor, exhibitor, and producer from attempting films that may say something," said the producer.

Against the charges of "propaganda" directed against films like *Blockade,* Mr. Wanger read the dictionary definition of the word, and pointed out that all films were thus "propaganda" for one thing or another. Citing *Variety's* comment that "Hollywood films have sold abroad millions of American-

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The SUB SELLER

CREDIT DEPT. . . . *Stop me if* **Leonard Lyons** didn't start this departmentalized setup, but *should we fight an original idea because it is* not ours? Are we WYFIPs or are we **William Green?** Which reminds me, Mr. Green is not a subscriber to *New Masses,* and **Ben Gold** says every union official ought to be.

BOOK DEPT. . . . The myst[ery] **Blake,** whose mystery story [*The Beast Must Die*] has just been published [under the] serious **Nicholas Lewis** who write[s] letter for *New* [*Masses*], turns out to be **C. Day** collection[s] as a monthly London literary *Eile*[en] *New Masses.* **Ruth McKenney,** whose [series] of *New Yorker* Sketches *My Sister* [*Eileen*] is being hailed as **the** funny book of the year, is the gal who won the palm for the most unconventional and authentic "exposé" of the Communist Party with her two articles in *New Masses.* It's rumored she'll do more pieces for us —come September.

CHILD WELFARE DEPT. . . . The daughter of an army colonel (not the one reported here recently who looks to *New Masses* and the *Daily Worker* for the facts of life) left home because the reactionary atmosphere was so stifling. Now she makes her living selling *New Masses* in the subways of New York! Parents with intelligent children should include a subscription to *New Masses* in home modernization plans.

POLITICAL DEPT. . . . A member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party reads *New Masses* in this order: (1) Cartoons. (2) Editorials. (3) Articles.

ART DEPT. . . . The reactionary reviewer of the Los Angeles *Times* whipped his typewriter into a fine frenzy over the WPA art exhibit there recently. How awful, he moaned, that the test of an artist's worth should be his awareness of the class struggle — why, these might all have been done by cartoonists of *New Masses!* Score apiece for WPA and N. M.

EDUCATION DEPT. . . . A non-army father wrote **Granville Hicks:** "I've just finished reading your *I Like America.* I'm sending a copy to my son at college to see if he's getting an education."

WYFIP DEPT. . . . Take this copy of *New Masses* with you on your vacation and may it be the beginning of many beautiful friendships. One WYFIP left last week with a promise to bring back ten yearly subs. And another contributes a rallying cry for the Drive. Hick, Hick, Hooray he says—or you can say as I do—Hicks, Hooray, for short.

Partially and definitely yours,

Charline Crawford

Sub Editor

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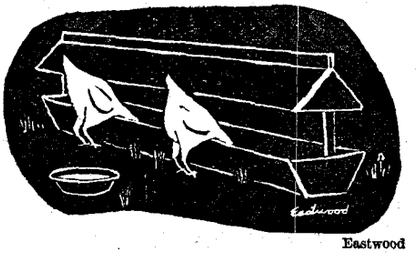
made industrial and commercial products," and that "it is not too fantastic to believe that the ideals and principles of American freedom and liberty" could not be as "effectively *sold through the same* medium," Mr. Wanger affirmed his intention, as a producer, to fight for his right to make such pictures. "My platform," he said, "is not to restrict the film industry to one audience but to make it *adjacent to the maximum* by attracting all audiences. . . . How can this well nourished public . . . be satisfied with nothing but the restricted films made in Hollywood?"

Hollywood's answer to the blockade of *Blockade,* according to the producer of the picture, should be to force the "unfair few, who have no right to blockade us, out in the open; to answer our critics by unleashing the volume of talent in this community so that they may create with good taste and artistic power films that will make us proud of our industry, fill the theaters and increase the power of the film till it becomes one of the proudest keystones in the spirit of democracy, the spirit that America is trying so desperately to protect for the salvation of all peoples!"

At the end of the addresses, a resolution embodying these sentiments was passed unanimously. It asked that, since pictures address themselves to the large interests of the general public, that public should be organized against "false attacks" on motion pictures like *Blockade,* "which dignify the screen and honor the growing intelligence and democratic unity of the American people." From the resolution came a temporary committee to develop further plans for insuring the freedom of the screen.

In the meantime, the support of progressive America has succeeded in many places in guaranteeing the showing of *Blockade,* in the face of reactionary attacks. Boston's Mayor Tobin, facing the unanimous opposition of a Tory city council, gave permission for the showing of a slightly cut version of the film. The censorship was not pleasing to Cardinal O'Connell's faction because they found the picture objectionable in its entirety, shot through and through with "Red, Russian Marxism." The picture, where it has been ignored by reaction, has made normal marks at the boxoffice. In the midst of the current anti-CIO terror in Catholic New Orleans, *Blockade* came and went without incident. Alert moviegoers everywhere continue their support of the film, now that Hollywood itself has come into the fight, and to the fight for many future films with the stirring social meaning of *Blockade.*

JAMES DUGAN.



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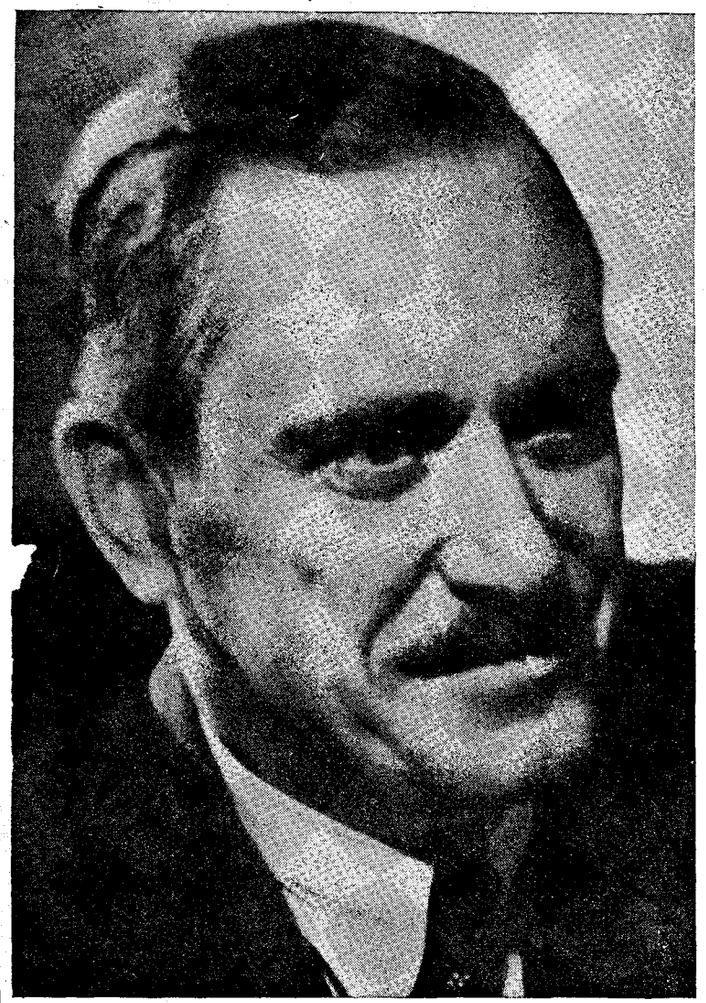

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